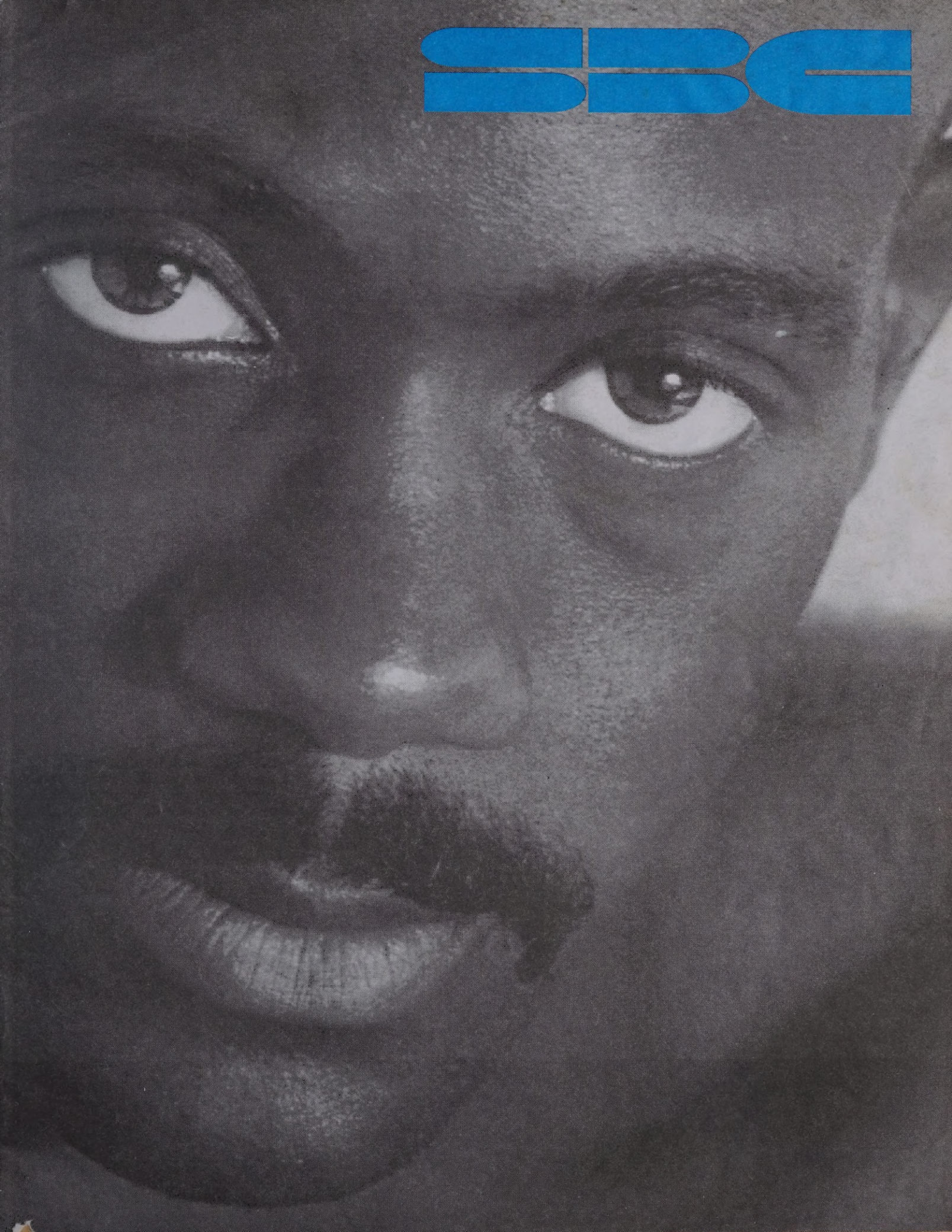
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Paul E. Keith III, MD, Director, Immune Suppressed Unit, Hollywood Community Hospital
Elaine R. Feraru, MD Emmanuel R. Lim, MD Erik Fleischman, DO Philip K. Stenquist, PhD

a new year is beginning

[in concept]

It is not so much that this year is ending, but that a new year is beginning.

It is hoped that as we become older, we become wiser and more humbled by the magnificent world around us.

It is not so much that this year is ending, but that a new year is beginning.

To all of our fabulously effeminate brother-brothers and brother-sisters and transgenders and transsexuals who have stood tall and proud while so many of us who could 'pass' did just that while you fought our battles, defended our being and kicked much enemy ass with a snap and a read and a vote and a march and a voice. You, you real men you, you Diva Men you. You who know who you are. We are blessed by your presence.

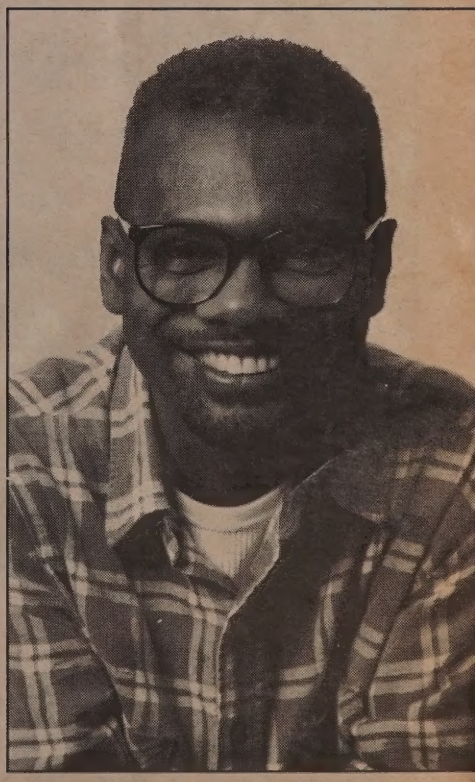
It is not so much that this year is ending, but that a new year is beginning.

And to you strong silent brothers. Stay strong, but remember, strong is not silent. Denial is silent. Self-hatred is silent. The closet is silent. A man is not measured by the size of his dick, but by the size of his heart, not by the display of biceps, but by the display of courage, not by being 'all that', but being who he is.

It is not so much that this year is ending, but that a new year is beginning. Whoever we are, however we are—butch, femme, light, dark, massive or diminutive—let's put on our hiking gear and climb this mountain together. From Moses to Martin, I hear the view from the mountaintop is as clear as the air is pure.

It is not so much that this year is ending, but that a new year is beginning. Let's share the life, let's share the light, let's share the love, my Afrocentric homosexual brothers.

SEE YOU AT THE TOP IN 1994.



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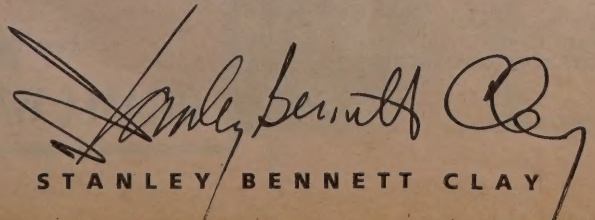

STANLEY BENNETT CLAY

SBC

a Monthly For The Afrocentric Homosexual Man

VOLUME TWO ISSUE SIX / DECEMBER 1993

STANLEY BENNETT CLAY
PUBLISHER AND EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ANDREW C. IRVING
ART DIRECTOR

GREGORY EUGENE TRAVIS
REVIEW EDITOR

PATRICK-IAN POLK
MUSIC EDITOR

KHEVEN LA GRONE
OAKLAND CORRESPONDENT

MARK F. JOHNSON
WASHINGTON D.C. CORRESPONDENT

PAUL SHIELDS
CHICAGOREGIONAL MANAGER

CHIP WILLIFORD
ATLANTA REGIONAL MANAGER

EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTORS:
STANLEY BENNETT CLAY
MARK F. JOHNSON
KHEVEN LA GRONE
PATRICK IAN-POLK
BLAINE TEAMER
GREGORY EUGENE TRAVIS
GREGORY VICTORIANNE

COVER AND CENTERFOLD MAN OF CHOICE
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COVER AND CENTERFOLD PHOTOGRAPHY
HOPETON STEWART
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ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY:
ARON BIRT, CHRIS CALLAS, DANIELA FEDERICI, SCOTT FREE, KATE GARNER, THEODORE T. LIN, CARL POSEY, TIM RICHARDSON SCOTT SCHAFER, HOPETON STEWART, TRI TRAN, GREGORY VICTORIANNE, JAMES WHITE, CHIP WILLIFORD

ADVERTISING SALES:
213.732.4242
FAX 213.733.5661

OFFICE STAFF
ANTHONY MICHAEL
DOMINIC HUNTER

SBC IS PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY STANLEY BENNETT CLAY PRODUCTIONS
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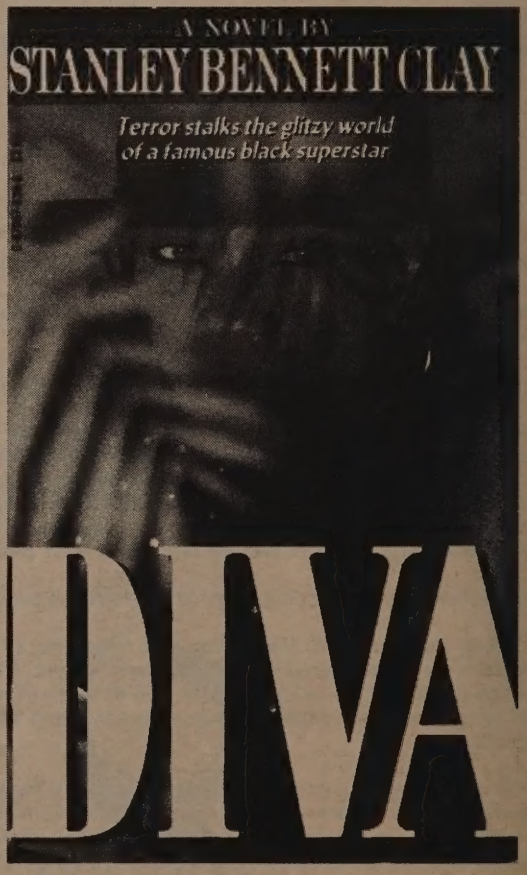
In Diva, author Stanley Bennett Clay captures the glamour—and suspense—that is show business.



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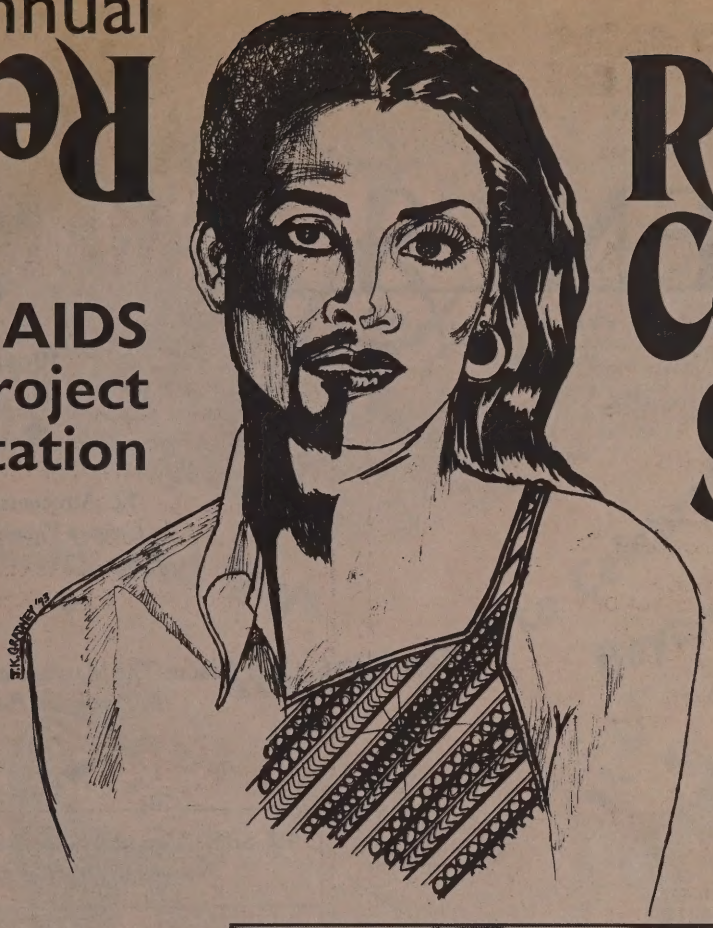

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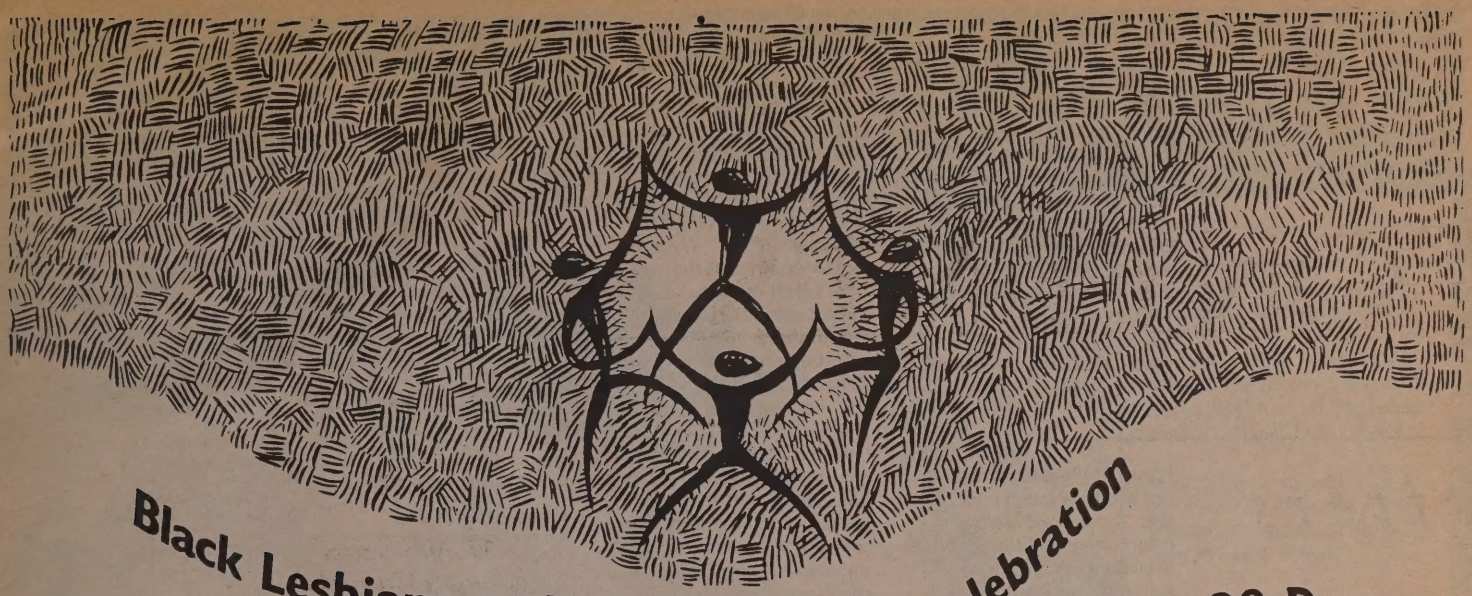

Black Lesbians and Gays from Silence to Celebration Beyond the 28 Days

7th Annual National Black Gay and Lesbian Conference and Institutes

Meadowlands Hilton Secaucus, New Jersey February 17-21, 1994

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letters

COMMON GROUND

I just can't help but thank you for guiding me indirectly by your articles dealing with gay life. Your magazine taught me more about myself than any other because it taught me to deal with who I am.

Keep it up, my beautiful Black brothers. We Black gay men as well as men and women of color shall realize that we, as a people, need to stop our petty hatred toward each other and meet on a common ground.

MARK L. LUCAS
Chicago, Illinois

I just felt I had to write to tell you how much I enjoy SBC. The articles are both informative and thought-provoking. As an African-American professional man, it enables me to learn of the feelings and experiences my brothers-n-the-life and I have in common.

Special mention must be made of the September (Vol. 2 Issue 4) issue's four-page spread on the Independence Day Party at Malibu Beach. Ooo-la-la!!! It was H-O-T!!! To have been there among those (other) strong, virile brothers who represented the full spectrum of noble Black manliness—the very fruit of Africa—would have been almost too much to handle.

I only wish that Chip Williford's photo coverage had been more extensive. How about including a "Best of the Beach Salute" in your next issue?

I look forward to its release, and you know where I'll be showing my patriotic fervor next July 4th!

DAVID KING
Washington, DC

I was just writing to question why you don't have personals in your publication. Then I reached the last page and was very pleasantly surprised. Keep the personals section just as it is; that is a perfect format.

Keep up the good work.

JONATHAN CHANDLER
New York, New York

AN OPEN LETTER TO VIBE MAGAZINE

As lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgendered persons of Afro-American, Afro-Caribbean, and Afro-Latin descent, we were appalled by Joan Morgan's profile of Buju Banton ("No Apologies, No regrets," October 1993), which seems to legitimize homophobia on so called cultural grounds.

Morgan claims that she is trying to give a voice to those who have not been heard in the controversy surrounding Banton's gay bashing hit "Boom Bye Bye", those she feels have a better understanding of Jamaican culture. We agree with Morgan that there is little effort made to understand the cultures of the diaspora. What we vigorously reject is a definition of Black culture that excludes us.

While Morgan's piece trots out every imaginable stereotype about Jamaican gay men — that they are rapists, child molesters, that they are affluent and prey on working-class men, that their sexual activities lead to dismemberment and death — it fails to quote a single openly gay Jamaican man in response. (Lesbians are apparently beneath notice.)

Nor does Morgan have an understanding of the dimension of homophobia within the diaspora. While there may be cultural sanction for anti-gay violence in Jamaica, Black lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and particularly transgendered persons have been murdered by homophobic, government-sanctioned death squads in Brazil and Colombia.

Given Morgan's attitude, it's no surprise that she refuses to accept that we can or should act on our own behalf. Thus, our organizing efforts raise questions about our Blackness and provoke slurs about our skin tone. Our successes inspire conspiracy theories about white, male "gay power".

There are certainly white lesbians and gay men who support us in our efforts to confront homophobia in our own communities, but the decision of Vibe's Editor-in-chief Jonathan Van Meter to publish so biased and defamatory a piece clearly illustrates that not all powerful, gay white men value or respect our lives.

In conclusion, Morgan's premise — that homophobia is an integral part of Black culture — is as scurrilous as her conclusion, that those who shun music or musicians who espouse homophobia do so out of racism or cultural insensitivity. And frightening as we find Morgan's attitude, it strengthens us in our resolve to continue to fight.

Sincerely,

DIRG AAAB-RICHARDS
Black Lesbians and Gays Against Media Homophobia
(London, England)
Deborah Bey
Lesbian, Gay Bisexual Center
University of Wisconsin

JACQUIE BISHOP
Whole Health Support Groups
Project of Men of Colors Together

CANDICE BOYCE
African-Ancestral Lesbians United for Societal Change

SHAWN BROWN
Lawyer

TED BROWN
Black Lesbians and Gays Against Media Homophobia
(London, England)

MANDY CARTER
Human Rights Campaign Fund

THEOPHILIS P. CLARKE
Jamaica Freedom Movement
(Kingston, Jamaica)

STANLEY BENNETT CLAY
Publisher and Editor-in-chief
SBC magazine

CATHY COHEN
Associate Professor
of Political Science,
Yale University

STEVEN CORBIN
Writer

VONDORA CORZEN
ColorLife Magazine

ELIAS FARAJAJE
Associate Professor
of History of Religions
School of Divinity
Howard University

GLEN FRANCIS
The Center International Lesbian and Gay Association Committee

SHARI FRILO
Co-director
New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film/Video Festival

JOAN GIBBS
Anti-biased Violence Project
Center for Constitutional Rights

JEWELLE GOMEZ
Writer

ADA GRIFFITH
Executive Director
Third World Newsreel

LYLE ASHTON HARRIS
Artist

THOMAS HARRIS
Film / video artist

MARJORIE HILL
Psychologist

LIDELL JACKSON
Men of All Colors Together

REGGIE JACKSON
Center of the Rainbow

CARY ALAN JOHNSON
Mid-Atlantic Regional Director
Amnesty International

BILL T. JONES
Choreographer / dancer

TAMARA JONES
Jamaican lesbian, born and bred

REVEREND ZACHARY JONES
Pastor,
Unity Fellowship Church

ISSAC JULIEN
Film/video producer
British Broadcasting Company
(London, England)

NATHAN KERR
Executive Director
People of Color In Crisis

PEPPER LABEIJA
Queen Mother
House of Labeija
Star of *Paris Is Burning*

PARNELL MARCANO
Co-chair
Black Men's Exchange / L.A.

SIMON NKOLI
President
Gay People's Health Forum
(Johannesburg, South Africa)

JOEY B. PRESSLEY
Community Organizer
New York AIDS Coalition

ROBERT REID-PHARR
City College of New York

MATTIE RICHARDSON
Kitchen Table Press

MARLON RIGGS
Film/videomaker

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Gay Me's Health Crisis

ASSOTTO SAINT
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SHEQUIDA
Gender Illusionist

BARBARA SMITH
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Programming Department
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FABIAN THOMAS
Actor / playwright / AIDS educator

ALJERNON TUSIL
Black AIDS Mobilization

LINDA VILLAROSA
Writer and editor

VALARIE WALKER
AIDS educator

GEORGE WAYNE
Celebrity Journalist
Paper Magazine

CALVIN CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS
Marketing Director / SBC magazine

STEVE WILLIAMS
Black Rock Coalition

TO OUR READERS:

The October issue of Time-Warner's *Vibe* magazine contains a glowing profile of reggae singer Buju Banton. Banton is best known for his hit "Boom Bye Bye", in which he exhorts his listeners to pick up an automatic weapon and murder gay men. Though the article claims that Banton is simply conveying the cultural values of Jamaicans, no lesbian or gay Jamaicans are quoted in response. Vibe's founder is producer/musician Quincy Jones, who has a reputation of being a friend of the lesbian and gay community. Please write Mr. Jones and ask him to speak out against the homophobia being propagated in his name. Write to:

Quincy Jones
c/o Richard Rosenberg,
The William Morris Agency,
151 El Camino Drive,
Beverly Hills, California
90212. The telephone number is
310.859.4000

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*** A chance to win a birthday call** from your favorite calendar guy.
*Birthday card signed by the guys

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TO PLACE MC/VISA ORDERS, PLEASE CALL (404) 591-5046
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Give a membership as a gift to your family/friends! Just fill in their information above and place your name in the space below so we can send a little note stating that their "Rundu Style" Membership was compliments of you!
Membership is from_____
Upon processing of membership, you will receive your 1994 "The Heated Version Calendar & T-Shirt (one size fits all XL). Monthly photos will start in January '94 and the full-color, hot video (which is currently being filmed through December '93) will be mailed to you in early February 1994.

Men...Rundu Style, Rundu Style, & The Heated Version are registered TM of Rundu Productions, Inc.

Rundu Productions, Inc. (404) 9?4-2222

{411}

Forum announces 1994 Annual Black Gay and Lesbian Conference and co-chairs; calls for presenters, volunteers and vendors

LOS ANGELES/NEW YORK—The Seventh Annual National Black Gay and Lesbian Conference is slated for February 17-21 1994 at the Meadowlands Hilton in Seacaucus, New Jersey. This year's theme, "Black Gays and Lesbians: From Silence to Celebration...Beyond the 28 Days", will celebrate the past contributions Black Gays and Lesbians have made to the world and the need to focus on the present contributions we make on a day-to-day basis beyond the month of February (Black History Month).

The Conference draws national and international participants from as far away as South Africa. The Conference workshops and institutes are facilitated by African-American Gays and Lesbians and Transsexual/Transgender communities. Workshop topics include: self-empowerment, culture/arts, family issues, youth issues, heterosexism, homophobia, health, public policy, economics, and gay/lesbian issues.

This year's Conference co-chairs are Valerie Wagner and Russell Thornhill. Both co-chairs serve as board members of the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, the sponsor of the annual Conference. In addition, the co-chairs are active and visible figures within the Gay and Lesbian community. Each year the Conference rotates out of Los Angeles. This year's host committee on the East Coast is the New York-based Beyond the 28 Days Committee. Candice Boyce and Paul Darling are committee co-chairs.

The Conference is currently soliciting workshop presenters, vendors and volunteers for the five day event. Workshop presenters are needed to provide information to participants on issues of relevance to the community. Vendors will have the opportunity to sell their merchandise in a prime location of the conference. Volunteers are needed to assist with specific Conference tasks. All volunteers will receive a significant discount on Conference fees.

The Forum will also sponsor two major fundraising events to help raise monies for the 1994 Conference Scholarship Fund. Funds will be used to bring PWA's (Persons with Aids) and financially challenged individuals to the Conference.

The Conference is sponsored by the Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum which was established in 1988 to strengthen, empower, and provide a network for African-American Gays and Lesbians.

For more information, contact The Forum in Los Angeles at 213.964.7820

National HIV program Executive Director to leave post

SAN FRANCISCO—At the October 16-17, 1993 meeting of the Board of Directors of the National Task Force on AIDS Prevention, NTFAP Co-Founder and Executive Director, Reggie Williams, formally announced that he will be leaving his position at the end of February 1994. Williams cited his declining health as one of the reasons for leaving the position he has held for five years. The NTFAP Board also announced that it would immediately begin a national search for a new Executive Director.

Williams stated, "I have been in this battle for a long time and I would like to have an opportunity to write about my experience both as a person living with HIV and as a Black gay man. I feel that the stories from those two perspectives have not been told yet and I would like to ensure that they happen before I die."

Williams began his local AIDS activism in 1984 in San Francisco and then in 1988 nationally with the start up of the National Task Force. As Co-Founder and Executive Director of the agency since it first received funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 1988, he has been an outspoken proponent for targeted prevention funding for gay men of color and other issues related to people of color.

An outspoken advocate and community leader, Williams served on many agency Boards of Directors, including AIDS Action Council, Mobilization Against AIDS, San Francisco Black Coalition on Aids, Shanti Project, and 18th Street Service, to name a few. He also has been a member of the San Francisco Ryan White CARE Planning Council for three years, having served as Co-chair for the past year, and has been a member of the Burroughs Wellcome Co. Community Advisory Board. Mr. Williams has also recently been featured in Marlon Riggs' latest film Non, Je ne Regrette Rien (No Regret), a documentary chronicling the lives of five HIV-positive Black gay men.

"Reggie has been a mentor and friend to many of us in the Black Gay and Lesbian community. The Task Force and the community will surely miss him," stated H. Alexander Robinson, President of the Board of Directors.

Raymond Dumas, NTFAP Board Vice President and Chair of the Executive Search Committee, said: "The Board has completed its plans for a national search and is prepared to move forward. We're looking for the best and the brightest."

For more information contact Alexander Robinson at 202.675.2320

New book blows myth about objective history

NEW YORK—Love makes the world go round unless, of course, you're gay. Then, even couples in history are portrayed as spinsters and lonely old men. A new book by Lesbian Lists author Dell Richards changes all that and in the process blows the myth of "objective" history out of the water.

Superstars: Twelve Lesbians Who Changed The World shows how much being a lesbian and being part of a couple or a female support network had on the lives of twelve of the world's most influential women. In life after life, Richards details how sexual identity was the core of these women's lives, that if the women had not been gay — and had supportive women in their lives — they never would have achieved success, much less fame.

Superstars completely reinterprets the lives of social work founder Jane Addams, nursing founder Florence Nightingale,
educators M. Carey Thomas, public health nursing founder Lillian Wald, historian Edith Hamilton and her sister industrial medicine founder Alice Hamilton, cross-dressing physician James Miranda Barry, lesbian feminist Natalie Barney, publisher Sylvia Beach, Harlem Renaissance patron A'Lelia Walker, child psychology founder Anna Freud and poet-gardener Vita Sackville-West.

"For most of these women, the fact that they were gay changed their professional life in profound ways," said Richards, a journalist trained in sociology who is fast becoming one of the leading pop-historians of the gay community. "By leaving out this "minor detail", scholars routinely distort the actual lives of notable gay men and lesbians".

Take Jane Addams.

An early girlfriend, Ellen Gates Starr, helped Jane Addams found Hull House. Her life-long companion, Mary Rozet Smith, not only did major fund-raising and built the Children's House but often gave Addams the money out of her own pocket to keep the Hull House doors open. Without these two women in her life, Addams never would have been able to start Hull House, much less keep it going until it became the formidable institution it was.

"These blanks not only give heterosexuals a false sense of security about their own sexuality and rob young homosexuals of role models but force historians to totally misrepresent gay people's lives," said Richards. "We need to completely re-think our willingness to protect the private lives of our historic figures."

Richards lives in Sacramento, California. She has also lived in London, Los Angeles and Washington, DC.

Stephen Semien's *Children of the Night* wins NAACP Theater Awards

HOLLYWOOD—Writer, director, choreographer Stephen Semien's already much-honored musical *Children of The Night* continued it's winning ways as it waltzed off with 3 awards out of a record 6 nominations at the 6th Annual NAACP Theatre Awards held November 15th at the Directors' Guild Theater here in Hollywood. Semien, previously nominated for his choreography for the Island musical De Obeah Mon won this time for his choreography while Byron Smith was honored for his musical score and arrangements.

"A sometimes hilarious, always haunting and dramatically moving blend of dance, music and drama, Semien's Broadway-quality show explores the People of Color homosexual community in a highly original and stylish way," SBC publisher Stanley Bennett Clay stated in a recent press release.

Originally commissioned in 1991 by the Black Gay and Lesbian Cultural Alliance, *Children* had its premiere at the Alliance's 2nd Annual Convention and Awards Show in Los Angeles.

Semien subsequently expanded the show and opened it commercially to unanimous critical acclaim. The L.A. Times, The L.A. Weekly and Drama-logue all listed Children of The Night on their "Critics' Choice" lists and Mr. Semien was the recipient of last year's GLAAD/LA Arts Award and SBC's Brother of the Year Award/The Arts.

Due to audience demand, plans are currently underway to remount the show in the Spring of 1994.

Stadtlanders Foundation formed; $100,000 to be donated to the HIV/AIDS community

PITTSBURGH—Formation of The Stadtlanders Foundation was announced on October 11, 1993, by Gregg Perelman, President of the Board. The Foundation will offer direct support on a national level to those charitable endeavors which improve the quality of life for patients living with chronic conditions.

An initial donation of $100,00 will be disbursed through The Stadtlanders Foundation HIV/AIDS Community Grant Fund, according to Mr. Perelman, who is also President of Stadtlanders Pharmacy. The $100,000 gift was donated by Stadtlanders Pharmacy, and will be disseminated during the first quarter of 1994 under the direction of the 16 member National AIDS Community Advisory Board of The Stadtlanders Foundation.

Through the HIV/AIDS Community Grant Fund, grants ranging in value from $1,000 to $10,000 will be awarded to projects which provide service in the area of nutrition and/or treatment information for individuals living with HIV/AIDS. Non-profit organizations interested in applying for grant money are encouraged to request grant guidelines from The Stadtlanders Foundation by calling 412-825-8105.

Application deadline for the first grant cycle is December 10, 1993, and funding decisions will be made under the guidance of the National AIDS Community Advisory Board of The Stadtlanders Foundation.

"The Foundation hopes to provide greater funding in the future, through directed fundraising campaigns such as "Raise the Rainbow", according to Mr. Perelman. The Stadtlanders Foundation "Raise The Rainbow" project will build a mile long rainbow flag which will appear one time only, during the Stonewall 25 International March on the United Nations in New York City, June 26, 1994. The project is expected to raise more than $500,000 for the Stadtlanders HIV/Aids Community Grant Fund to benefit AIDS service organizations nationwide.

Stadtlanders Pharmacy is a nationwide pharmacy specializing in serving the needs of individuals living with HIV/AIDS and other chronic conditions. In the past few months alone, Stadtlanders Pharmacy has sponsored national symposiums on HIV and nutrition; provided over 100,000 free educational nutrition booklets; developed a quarterly magazine devoted to HIV-related issues; and opened a summer HIV Resource Center in Fire Island, New York. They are also underwriting the costs for creating the world's largest rainbow flag for The Stadtlanders Foundation Fundraiser, "Raise The Rainbow".

Community Arts Center hosts "Artists Ball" at Glam Slam

LOS ANGELES—The Community Arts Center will hold its first annual fundraiser, The Artist's Ball, on Friday December 10, 1993 from 8 p.m. - 2 a.m. at Glam Slam nightclub at 333 S. Boylston in downtown Los Angeles.

The Community Arts Center is the first gay identified institutional center for the arts, formed for gay and lesbian artists, their non-gay peers, their work and their friends.

The Artist's Ball will be fun and totally outrageous with a "Venetian-style" Ball. Guests are invited to use their imagination and dress festive and flamboyant with a touch of class. Entertainment includes the Radical Faeries Surprise with performances by some of your favorite queer artists, segments from Steve Semien's multi-award wining choreopoem "Children of the Night" and special guest performances.

Tickets cost $25 for General Admission. VIP Supporter tickets are $65 and VIP Patron Level tickets are $100 and both include a buffet dinner in the VIP lounge.

Please call the Community Arts Center hotline at 213.883.1630 for more information.

Those honoured 2B featured & witness the OCTAVIA & YOU talent revue durin' the Brothuh II Brothuh gatherin' at Camp TATA POCHON aka Camp TATA VEGA accordin' to DAVITA, knew that it not only smoked against the grain of the wilderness but sauntered into sunrise.

After digestin' a meal that stunk worse than a 'tainted' 1 nite stand, the outpost became the familiar. We then downed various natural berry muffins, homemade baked brownies with flava and Hansen's juices & herbal teas courtesy of the APT [Aids Prevention Team] posse, as the credo of the evenin' was [[A second on the lips, is a year on the hips]].

With musical vibes of jazz outfit FOURPLAY'S latest [[Between The Sheets]] via Warner Bros., enhanced by a cozy & well controlled blazin' fire, we sat in square circle & demanded 2B served in full while witnessin' history in the makin'.

Compere of the evenin' was our supreme drag diva OCTAVIA who stalked the floor in a pair of suede DMDP's [Dick Me Down Pumps] in search of any wannabe drags for the Who Is MISSY CARMICHAEL contest, but there weren't any. So, the nubian chocolate towerin' queen took no prisoners & served chapter and verse on reclaimin' & reaffirmin' the [me I see in you] and [It's about freein' you 2B you] philosophy.

Openin' the not ready 4 prime time showin' was DARROW BIRT'S dramatic monologue [A Distress Diva] from the critically acclaimed [[Children Of The Night]] on tales of a prima donna darlin'. The pairin' of BLAINE TEAMER & PARRIS GILL readin' of 2 block boys' sexual desires from E. LYNN HARRIS jus' released [[Just As I Am]] novel became the hottest piece next 2 any week-end trade.

Spiritual guru SIRI SAT NAM SINGH uptempo lip syncin' 2A traxx from our snap on, snap off wig rocker TINA TURNER had the nephews groovin' as co-host YOGI & BOO BOO provided a 2 step shake & twist. Bay area songwriter BLACKBERRI's downtempo bluesy & hilarious [Your Cum Is Still On The Pages Of Mine] drew more laughters than that tired eurocentric dragon snow queen LUAPUR, who will melt away faster than phoney bologny or was that MILLI VANILLI?

Speakin' of smut, I was asked 2 serve rhyme-n-reason on agin' sex vixens with credentials. I mentioned Ms. FLOSS b-side (I Love You, You Love Me, Give Me Your Money) traxx was dropped from her self-centered boxed set 2 boost expected sagin' sales. The only shenanigans Ms. LADY MARMALADE had goin' on was recordin' 2 discs of ear bleedin' soul & seasonal chestnuts 4 your holiday pleasure. But 4 the real crust on ETERNAL DIVA, study the LA-based bohemian fanzine BUTI VOXX, cuz' I won't go there in this column.

The Men On Retreat served the down low on all the naughties includin' a 'dis' on the DONALD WOODS cabin of snorin' that had this writer move 2 the lovers cabin where romantic candlelites was the flava of the nite. They also caught a couple of brothuhs sharin' an intimate moment under the stars, but 4 the real crust, jus' study BUTI VOXX and watch your nipples erect & toes curl.

Nursin' an attack of yellow jackets, CLARENCE WILLIAMS who's motto [I'm single] was engraved N2 the trees graciously rekindled 2 blues ditties [Kitchen Man] & [You Got The Right Key, But The Wrong Key Hole] that would send BESSIE SMITH & MA RAINEY from their graves & slap the mutha 4 the fine remakes, cuz' he showed his ass. SBC's own marketin' associate PETER MCDANIELS enthusiastically performed a capella NAT KING COLE'S popular standard [Straighten Up And Fly Right] that would put many of today's 5 & dime wannabe crooners 2 rest. This brothuh has a voice & should be signed, sealed & delivered 2 a label. Trust Me.

My two DDF [Drop Dead Fine] brothuhs RUDY & JIMMIE niced up ATB's [At The Beach] guru DUANE BREMOND and casually rendered a WINANS song [Winners] that had the nephews fallin' in the aisles & N2 the arms of the waitin' as these 3 stallions would put those borin' bargain basement bands to shame. Guaranteed.

But the evenin' belonged to PEPE LaBELLE & GLADASS KNIGHT with their [I Don't Do Duets] traxx. Makin' a grandiose back door entrance wearin' accessories of pleather with bubble gum earring condoms & draped in cheap bedroom sheet linen from K-MART that only a DDT [Dirty Dick Trade] would sleep on after you tossed him on the sofa couch.

The bosom buddies cat clawed center stage as GLADASS broke down & got emotional but failed to steal the show once PEPE got those wings to flap & commanded all attention. The joint jumped with the purest of joy as the nephews rose 2 salute these wannabe contestants for the Who is MISSY CARMICHAEL drag diva talent contest. And if any unholy duo out there even thinks about revivin' [Duets], I have only 1 thing 2 say - Don't cuz' GLADASS & PEPE now own that song with authority.

With proper editin' & backin', the OCTAVIA & YOU revue would slice nicely between MARTIN & IN LIVING COLOR & make The ROBERT TOWNSEND revue look like kiddie porn cuz' the crib was smokin'-but there was no sign of fire!

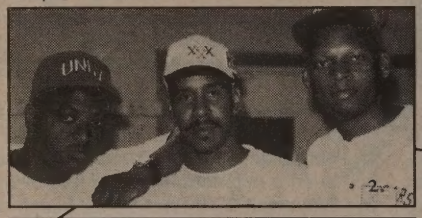


FIG. 1: *Peter McDaniels; photo by Aaron L. Birt*

FIG. 2: *Rudy, Duane & Jimmie; photo courtesy Gregory Victorianne*

FIG. 3: *Yogi, Tina & BooBoo photo by Aaron L. Birt*

FIG. 4: *Glad-ass Knight and Pepe LaBelle; photo by Tim Richardson*

FIG. 5 : *Octavia!; photo by Tim Richardson*

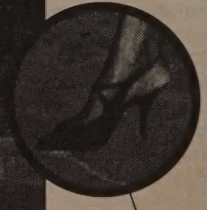
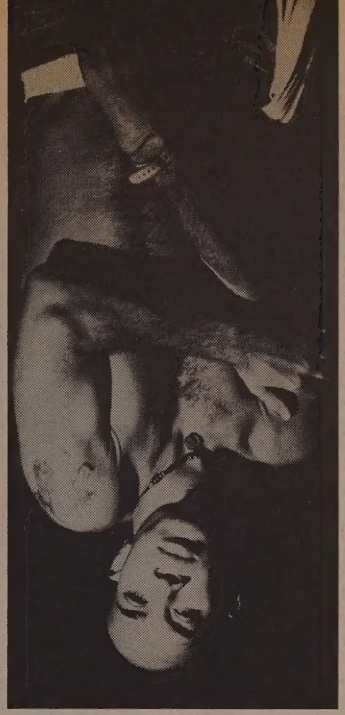
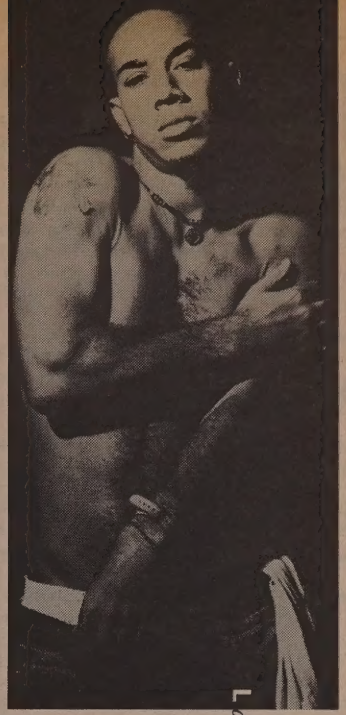


FIGURE 5A. OCTAVIA'S SHOE (DETAIL)





SLANDOR WITH CANDOR

As member of the BWA oligarchy, a gang of 15 or so media brothuhs rangin' from designer DJ's to Nubian models and smart ass journos who are doin' for themselves, I'm often asked to share my views on the muzik industry & artists I never gave a damn about, includin' that barkin' dragon queen who relives therapy sessions on stage.

There's also a 20 year old beatnik banjee African / Jewish / Cherokee brothuh of flava named JUSTIN WARFIELD. I studied homeboy in '91 with his mellow hip hop jazz (Steppin' With The Sound) featurin' the POET SOCIETY for only $.99. But after a few 1 offs on my disc player, he was a fixture in my collection.

Recently, his NY Citi publicist who must have been from Seacaucus, New Jersey served me a 6AM wake up call to interview her man-child client. She heard about a fabulous magazine in LA & I knew she wasn't talkin' about BLK. We continued to chit chat a bit & had scheduled an interview in a few days. I rushed Girlie SBC so she'd be familiar with the unfamiliar.

A couple of days later, Missy serves my answerbox chapter & verse. The interview is canceled because JUSTIN would oppose the nudity. It wasn't an issue of bein' sliced in a magazine of homosexual flava because he even turned down Playboy. I didn't think much of the decline since there have been a few occasions when interviews were denied because some artists are uncomfortable bein' sliced between flesh.

A few weeks later, I received an overnite express parcel stamped top priority. Inside was a CD titled ((B-Boys on Acid)) via Qwest/WB, A 'Parental Advisory' sticker & 9 salacious photos includin' 1 givin' the FU finga & a seductive b/w shot of a half naked man. What makes of dis? I phone Ms. Thing & she attempts to throw shade by sayin' ((Oh, did I send that 2U, it was obviously a mistake. I meant URB magazine, are you familiar?))

Yeh, it's a hip hop & modern primitive culture mag I tell her. She later advised me to review the disc & don't run the photo 'cuz JUSTIN would flip if he saw himself in SBC. There was a quick goodbye & a loud click.

My brothuhs at URB gave ((B-Boys on Acid)) a duly noted review. Personally, I found the collection lackin' in originality outside a couple of traxxs. The familiar loop of (People Makes the World Go Around) along with (Fisherman's Gotto) & a Latin-ish tango vibe on (K Sera Sera), but otherwise not much to warrant my attention & OOPS There He Is. Now flip JUSTIN flip.

Peroxide pussy whip vixen **LONNIE GORDON**

You put me in a bad mood

Low profile **JUSTIN WARFIELD**

Justin would flip if he saw himself in SBC

The 1st time I studied Ms. Goodie 2 shoes before reachin' prima donna status was in '82 when WHITNEY hung out with NONA HENDRYX, NILE ROGERS & NY CITI PEECH BOYS' vocalist R. BERNARD FOWLER on a band called MATERIAL with ((One Down)). Her primitive & soft vocals over a downtempo groove raised a strong buzz & she gained instant cult status. Today, our darlin' sista returns with THE JAMS titled (Whitney Does The Jams) and the sista blows like you haven't heard before. If you worship our 1 & only, then seek in haste this gem. Trust me.

DENZEL AND WHITNEY

No stranger to rumors, WHITNEY is said to be nicin' up to DENZEL WASHINGTON in yet another remake of (A Bore is Starred) oops, I mean (A Star Is Born IV). And if things get ruff for her, all she has to do is click her heels 3 times & sing (I Will Survive).

SENIOR DIVAS ON THE MOVE

60's kick-back girlie group PATTI LABELLE & the BLUEBELLES celebrate the holidays with 2 discs ((Down the Aisle)) & ((Sleigh Bells Jingle Bells & Bluebelles)) via Relic Records in Hackensack, New Jersey of all places. Relive the glory years of those screamin' on (Tear After Tear), (I Sold My Pussy To The Junkman), (C'est La Vie) & many seasonal chestnuts with linear notes & photos of the ageless divas. Box in your calendar for March 04th when PATTI's devotees will scrub her star on Hollywood Blvd. & gather 4A membership drive and worship their livin' idol. Dial direct & not collect to 213. 731.9097 for mo' faxx.

Ladies over 40 with fame, fortune & motherhood celebratin' 20 years of chart success, the POINTER SISTERS drop ((Only Sisters Can Do That)) via ERG/SBK. The trio made an indelible mark on the music scene & have helped to open the doors for today's girlie groups. Traxxs on notice (Tell It To My Heart), (Eyes of A Child), (I Want Fireworks) & the midtempo groover (Don't Walk Away) with moody & soulful vocals warrants your attention.

WINNERS AND LOSERS

Hopin' to $$$ N on the Old Jill Swing Award goes to New Jersey puppet trio JOMANDA. Are these the same girlies who made (Make My Body Rock)? I don't think so. They fight their way through (Does This Music Love You?) No! (Life), (Don't Fight The Feelings) & (Back To You) show their true gifts, but it's not here. Don't give up the day jobs.

Winner of the annual Cookie Cutter Awards with credentials goes to Baltimore's paint on cocktail dress & weave diva ULTRA NATE's ((One Woman's Insanity)) via Warner Bros., & our peroxide pussy whip vixen LONNIE GORDON's ((Bad Mood)) on ERG/SBK. Not your average 5 and dime sex kittens, these girlies have clawed their way 2 the top of all the Dance Charts & they make love 2 our ears & hips when we enter Discoland.

Followin' the foot steps of ((Blue Notes...)) the latest by ULTRA brings flava of the BASEMENT BOYS, SOULSHOCK & CUTFATHER, NELLIE HOOPER, D-INFLUENCE & the reincarnation of blue-eyed soul BOY GEORGE on the simmerin' & hauntin' (I Specialize In Loneliness). Lead-off traxx (Joy) & (Show Me) will be anthems with (Incredibly You), (You're Not The One) & (Feelin' Fine) waitin' in the wings. The sleazy titled cut (One Woman's Insanity) is a red light bump & grind which guarantees 2 rise U for the occasion. Trust Me.

Durin' a promotional tour in Chicago where ULTRA performed with her 2 Go-Go dancers 2 DAT earlier traxxs (Scandal), (Rejoice) & (It's Over Now), the club was called FOXY & our darlin' was quoted/overheard sayin' ((Wasn't that club called that in *All My Children* with Jesse, Vera & Angie?)) Real cute ULTRA.

LONNIE's collection kicked off with (Bad Moods) that sported 12 mixxes for guaranteed success. The line-up of TODD TERRY, BLACK BOX & ROGERS on controls as our towerin' siren shine on (Missing You), (Don't Stop Lovin' Me) & (Happening All Over Again) will repeat success. The traxx to study is her version of GLORIA GAYNOR's (I Will Survive) receives grand treatment & she now owns it with arrestin' authority. Buy it now.

Whoops! There She Is Again! goes to CANDY J aka SWEET PUSSY PAULINE, the house hussy assaulted us with (Hurt Me Hurt Me) & (Hateful Helen Head) has returned with (Whoops... X-Rated) featurin' THE PIMP TEAM. Already sellin' over 30,000 in Chi-town, our MISSY has jus' signed an exclusive deal with UK Vinyl Solution with an album due in early '94 & I can hardly wait.

I didn't think much of GRACE JONES' long overdue traxx (Sex Drive) via Island. The 3 mixxes of misses R as soft as shit. Go back 2 the studio Grace cuz' this won't draw flies.

Early winner of the Fly By Night Award goes 2 Brit's clone of PAULA AWHO. GABRIELLE'S marketed like a Pop Tart & sings like a flea. Her rushed release ((Finding A Way)) via London/Go Disc! are candy-coated cuts (Say What You Gotta Say), (Going Nowhere) & lead off traxx (Dreams). She says ((I might be here today & gone tomorrow)). She must have spoken to LATOYA cuz' she right.

Our Good Lookin' Out 4 Recipient goes 2A real artist 4 real people in the 90's goes to ME'SHELL NDEGE'OCELLO's hip hop tales of urban life full of love, intelligence & metaphor ((Plantation Lullabies)) courtesy of Maverick/Warner Bros. Her down low gatherin' with The Watermelon Philosophy posse of local poets, designers & glory seekers at the legendary Troubadour near 90210 was chock full of fortune hounds & media writers studyin' tomorrow's next...

She carried the pilgrims back to the slave ships on (Step Into The Project) & (Call Me). (If That's Your Boyfriend (He wasn't Last Nite) was a crowd favorite. Playin' several instruments, ME'SHELL's music sounds so damn good, you can't help but fall in love with it. Her smokey vocals melted the cocktails of the packed house groovin' to (I'm Diggin' You (Like An Old Soul Record) & the lead off traxx (Dred Loc) carried the midnight worshippers N2 streets after witnessin' true music in the makin'.

ME'SHELL is one of those rare soul singas who gives music that eases the

F*ly by night award-winner* **GABRIELLE**

marketed like a pop tart

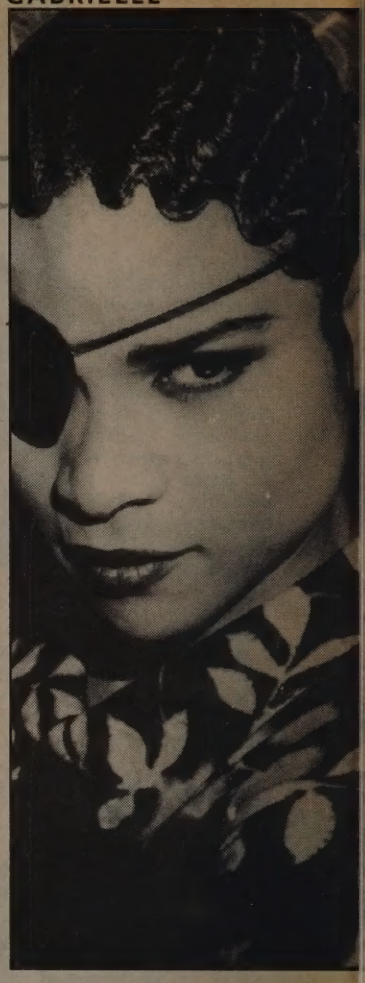


FIG. 8 *(below): SHOW ME JOY with promoter Terry Martin, darlin' diva Aisha, sex vixen Ultra Naté & DJ Jack "Hi-Fi" Walls; photo by Scott Free*

photo of justin warfield: "courtesy" of reprise records;

photo of lonnie gordon: james white;

photo of gabrielle: kate garner

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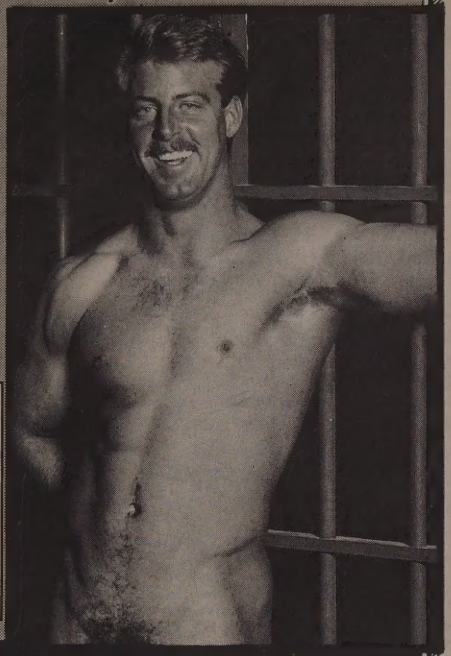

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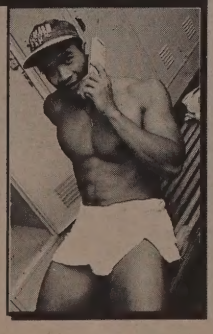
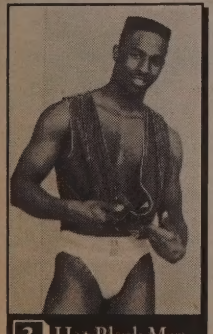
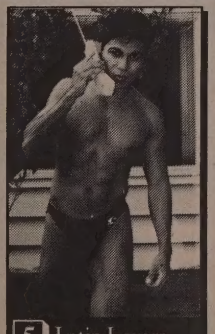




3 Hot Black Men
4 Men Wanting Black Men



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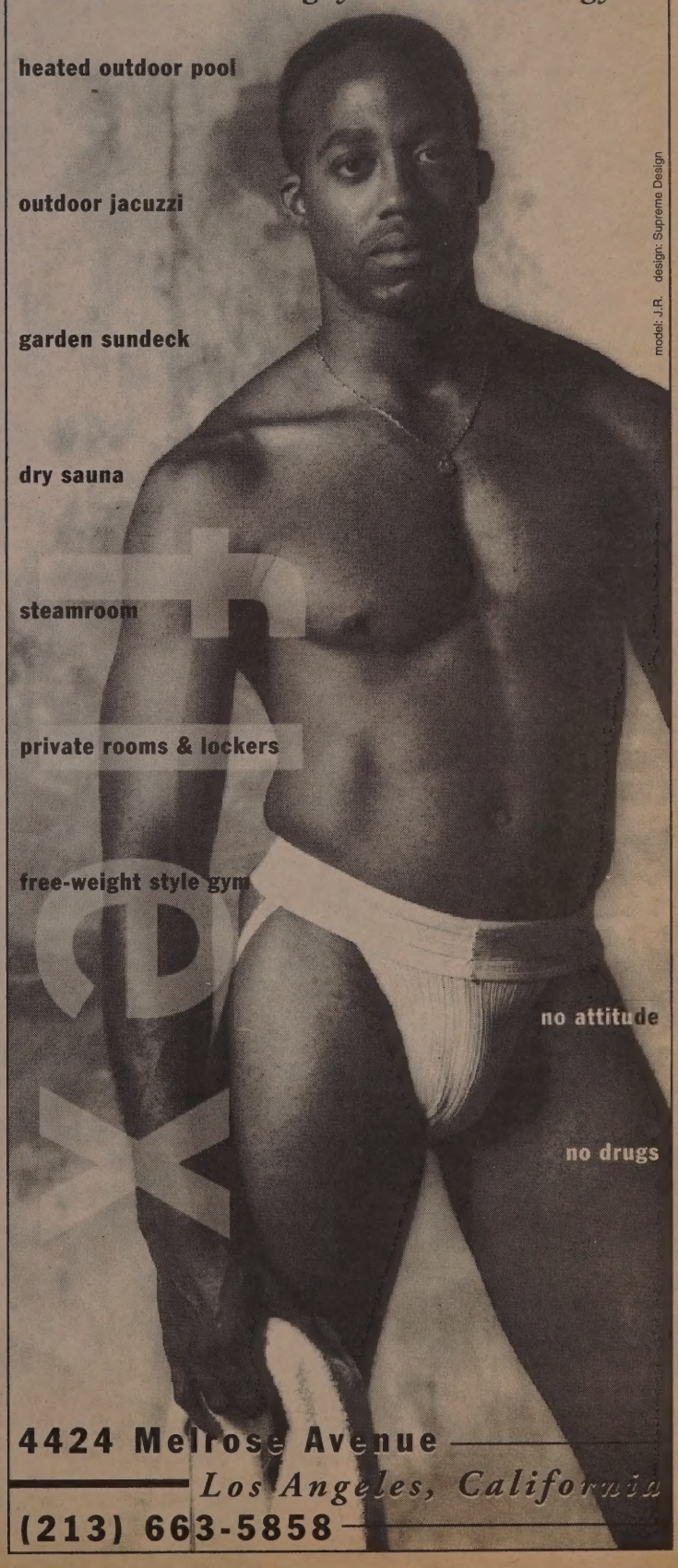

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Oleta

[the marriage of substance & style]

Her voice is as thick and rich as homemade Mississippi maple syrup. Her piano playing is technique classical brimming with rhythm and blues and gospel spice. Her songwriting exhibits music and poetry matured beyond her thirty odd years. All of this Oleta Adams demonstrated at a live performance last month at The Roxy, a Sunset Strip watering hole for the industry's diverse journalistic pundits and L.A.'s club de jour for the seriously musically inclined.

As I sat on the raised press platform in the club surrounded by the steady hum of pre-show conversation, I quietly recalled the highlights of Oleta's career—the critically acclaimed debut album, Circle of One, selling more than a million copies and spawning the mega-hit single, "Get Here", which earned her a Grammy nomination for Best Pop Female Vocal Performance. The exhilarating cover of Elton John's Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me", (garnering her a second Grammy nomination, this time in the R & B category. And now her recently released follow-up effort, Evolution, featuring the smash "I Just Had To Hear Your Voice".

Finally the musicians took to the dark stage. The lights came up bright, a hush fell over the "standing room only" crowd, and the band kicked into the musical intro of the new album's title cut.

The backstage curtains then parted, and out popped this pint-sized woman wearing a black, form-fitting catsuit and a smile as big as Jack Nicholson's "Joker" (all warmth and no menace). I could hardly believe that this tiny creature could be the mighty-voiced Oleta Adams I had heard on record. But then she sat down at the black baby grand, opened her mouth and put all questions to rest. With a voice as big as Martha Wash's and as soulful as Mahalia, Oleta took full command of the stage and her audience, all willing captives of her musical embrace.

As she pounded away at the keyboard with a virtuosity and belted out the lyrics to "Circle of One", it became immediately evident that no studio recording could possibly capture the energy, style and magic of Oleta live. And when she performed the gut-wrenching ballad, "My Heart Won't Lie", she sang the words of love she could not bring herself to return with haunted poignancy. Torch songs like "When Love Comes To the Rescue" and "I Just Had To Hear Your Voice" followed, confirming a musical gift developed from a "classical career" beginning.

"I was studying as a lyric soprano. My dream was to start out at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma and then go to Julliard," she explains. "But then I thought, perhaps I would make a greater smash success by going into something else that would give me more versatility. So, instead, I went directly into clubs."

This marriage of the classical training to a solid R & B/gospel/jazz foundation has prompted many to compare Oleta to the likes of Roberta Flack and Donnie Hathaway. This is not at all surprising because she wholeheartedly acknowledges those two artists as her biggest influences.

"I was greatly influenced by them because they have all these [musical] qualities in them. They have that classical discipline," she says.

The daughter of a Baptist minister, Oleta, like so many of our greats, sang in and directed her Dad's church choir. This also sparked family controversy as her father did not want her singing secular music.

"That wasn't exactly his dream unless you're gonna sing professional gospel. But I just felt like it was so important to share my gift with as many people as possible. He finally came around to seeing it my way."

[Oleta later dramatized this ordeal in a tune written to her parents, "I've Got To Sing My Song".]

However, her deep gospel roots have not been forgotten. In the middle of her concert she treated her audience to a rousing and wonderfully arranged medley of genre standards including "This Little Light of Mine", "By and By" and "Since I Laid My Burdens Down". Inviting people to clap and sing along, Oleta held church!

Gospel, in fact, is present in every song she sings, taking consensual dominance over her formal technique.

The supreme ease and confidence with which she sings is truly remarkable. This is never more evident than on her covers of two classics, James Taylor's "Don't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight" and Billy Joel's "New York State of Mind".

"I want to sing it in a way that can make everybody forget about the person who originally did it. I'm not one of those performers who, before each song, says Here's one that so-and-so wrote. I don't want you thinking about them. I want you here with me."

As expected, Oleta's encore performance featured her already classic version of Brenda Russell's "Get Here". But she surprised us by closing the show with a performance of her new CD's finale, the optimistic "Window of Hope", a song Oleta wrote after reading a article in Reader's Digest about a young black girl dying of leukemia and her family's effort to find black bone marrow donors for black cancer patients.

"I thought about her courage throughout this ordeal and the pain she went through. She had hope and she never gave up," Oleta remembers. "And I wrote a song from that, thinking, Isn't it something that young people who are so physically challenged can still find hope? There are a lot of people who don't have those great big problems, yet, they still manage to find that little old sore that they pick at all the time."

> In the darkness of your private room
> You've bee picking at the scab of some old wound
> You're cuddling up to sorrow
> like it's your best friend
> Thinking it's an inescapable end
> See the light shining on the wall
> It's gonna shine through the nightfall
> Can't you see the Window of Hope?

"Songwriters—" she reflects. "We're like voices for the public. We all feel these things. I just try to find an artistic way to express that emotion in as few words as possible."

Her breathtaking live performance at The Roxy proved she knows how to feel whatever song she sings, whether she wrote it or not, and is a master at connecting with her audience.

"There were so many years of traveling around doing three shows a night, six nights a week for fifty to fifty-two weeks out of the year doing what I'm doing, singing live to the public. I feel very comfortable on stage. In fact, when I'm recording, its to get a bigger audience so that I can keep singing live. My destination is the stage. That's where I live."

She laments the fact that so many young performers don't know "how to perform live."

"They [producers] put these test tube babies together in the studio and then, when they try to make it real or live on the stage, they're in trouble."

Acknowledging her strong following in the Black gay male community, she recently performed at a benefit for the National Gay ad Lesbian Task Force.

"I've had a gay following for years, mainly from [performing in] the clubs.

"I have a lot of gay friends. They're people who just want someone to understand. When I'm singing songs about love, anybody can be talking. That's what you need to hear. That's what people in general need to hear. And I think that's what is so greatly appreciated."

TEXT BY PATRIK-IAN POLK, MUSIC EDITOR

CityLine

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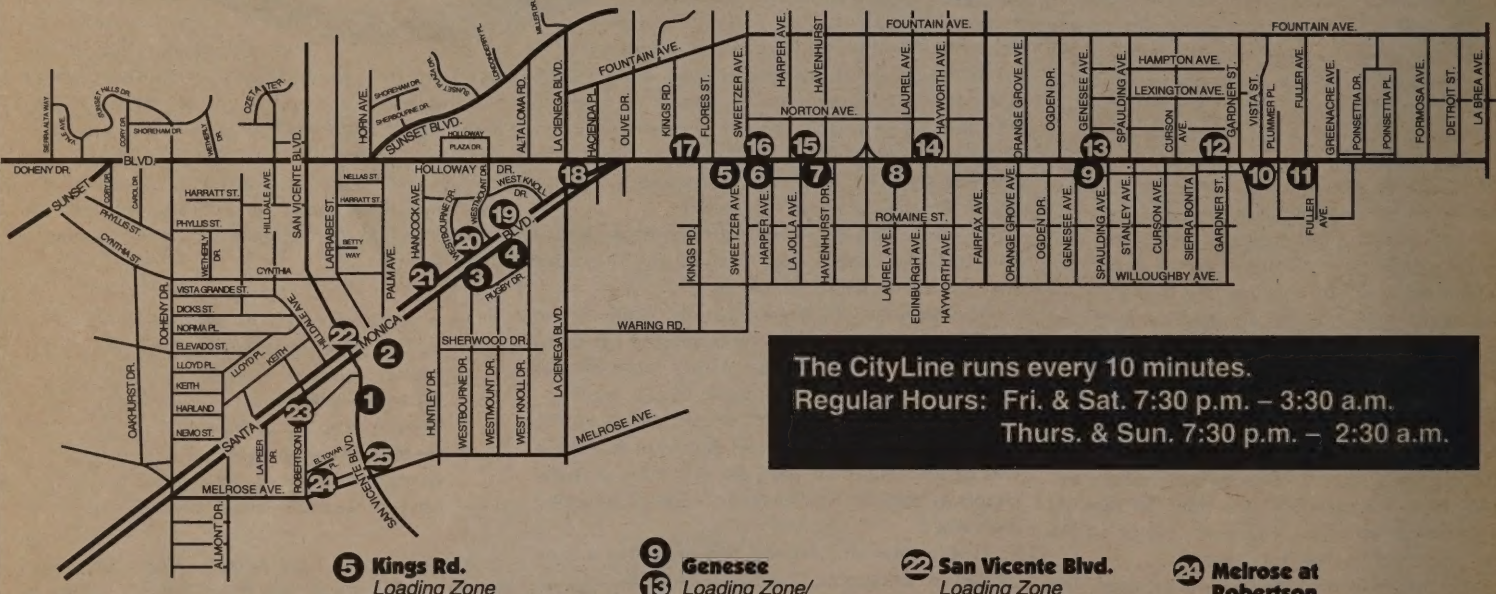

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- Ubatuba
- Chick A Boom
- Coast Playhouse
- Café La Boheme
- Marix

6 Sweetzer Ave.
16 *Red Zone/RTD Stop*
- Arrow Market
- Irv's Burgers
- La Bottega
- Good Times Pizza
- The Flowering Tree
- Capone's

7 Havenhurst/La Jolla
15 *Loading Zone/ RTD Stop*
- Gold Coast
- Marco's Trattoria
- Circus of Books
- Hoy's Wok
- Silver Spoon
- Chef Ming's
- Tandoori Nights
- Buzz

8 Laurel Ave.
14 *Loading Zone/ Red Zone*
- French Market
- La Fabula
- 7969
- Rafter's
- Bank of America
- Figs

9 Genesee
13 *Loading Zone/ Red Zone*
- The Spike

10 Vista St.
RTD Stop
- Hunter's
- Astroburger

11 Fuller Ave.
RTD Stop
- Movietown Plaza
- Formosa Cafe
- Yukon Mining Co.
- Canton Chinese Restaurant

12 Gardner St.
Red Zone

17 Kings Rd.
RTD Stop
- Hugo's Restaurant
- Barney's Beanery

18 La Cienega Blvd.
RTD Stop
- IHOP
- Adriatico Cafe
- De Medici

21 Hancock
Loading Zone
- Paradise Grill
- Cultured Class

22 San Vicente Blvd.
Loading Zone
- Rage
- Bank of America
- Bank of L.A.
- A Different Light Bookstore
- Marco Polo Mongolian BBQ
- Cal Fed Bank
- Bazaar

23 Robertson at Santa Monica Blvd.
Loading Zone
- The Backlot
- Studio One
- The Abbey
- Hamburger Haven
- Tacos Tacos
- The Greenery
- Pavilions
- Motherlode
- Greenwich Village
- Cafe D'Etoile
- Michael's Crepes
- Bosa Nova
- Cafe Ibiza
- Drake's

24 Melrose at Robertson
Loading Zone
- Babylon

25 San Vicente at Melrose
RTD Stop
- J. Sloane's
- Replay Country Store

WEST HOLLYWOOD CityLine

MAN OF CHOICE: MICHAEL MITCHELL

He is handsome and he is talented. He is goal-oriented and he is focused. He is almost 24 years old (his birthday is December 28th) and he's an actor.

He's Michael Mitchell and he's ready.

Born in Wichita, Kansas, Michael relocated to Dallas in 1986 where he finished high school. His formal education was completed at The University of Texas in Austin where he majored in Journalism before perusing a theatrical career.

Moving to New York City this past July, this aggressive go-getter quickly landed featured parts in a new production of the Douglas Turner Ward stage classic Day of Absence and roles in two original one-acts being produced by the New Actors' Ensemble.

"I love New York," he says proudly, "particularly the variety of people; the Puerto Ricans and all the fabulous Black folks. It's not so lily white here."

Described as strong willed, stubborn, bright and studious by his friends, Michael is currently single, but is definite about the ideal man for him:

"Someone who is independent. An independent professional in his mid-30's to his early 40's. Also someone who lives in a big city. I'm not a very rural person.

"And definitely someone with enough life of their own to allow me to have a life of my own."

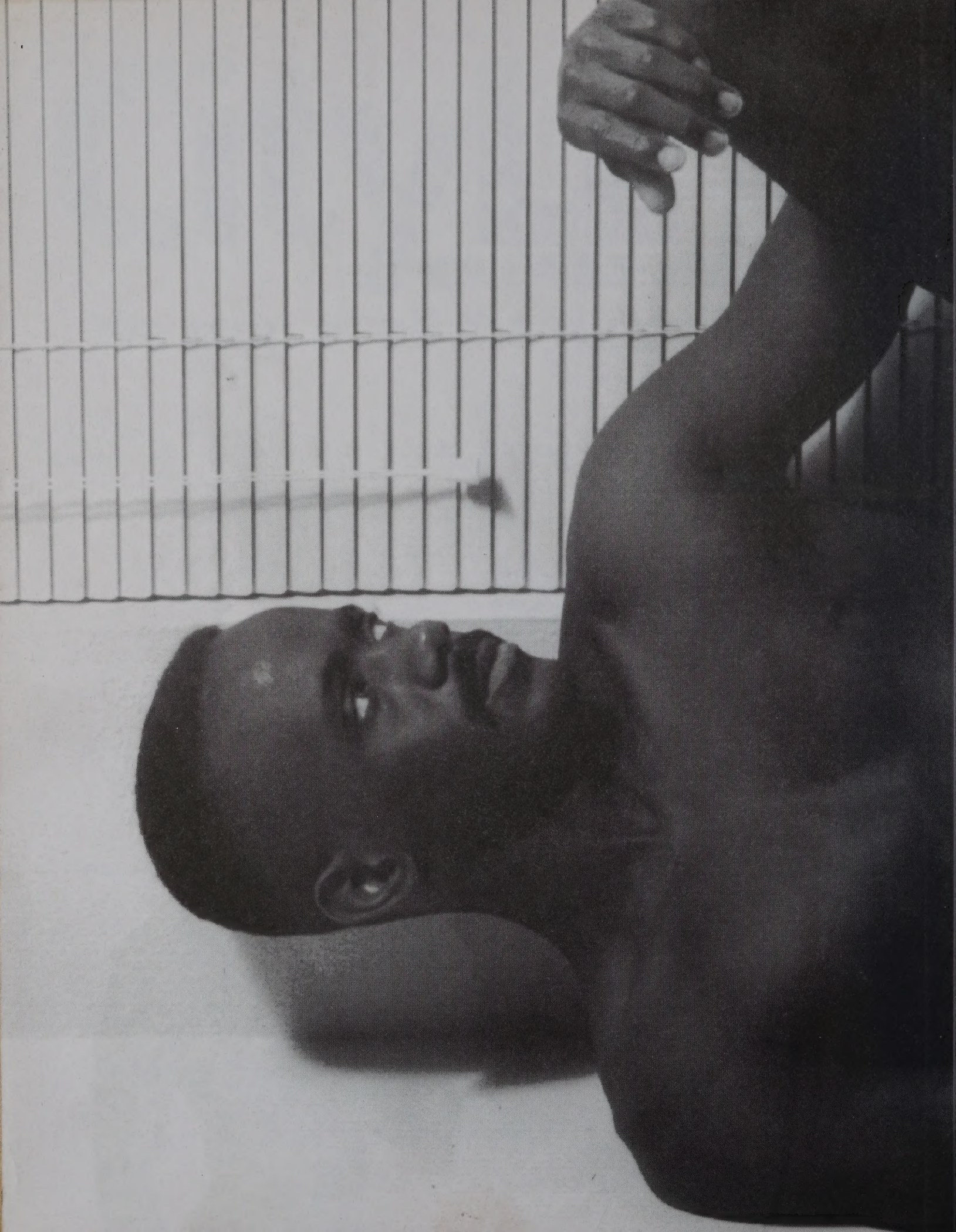
Michael's hobbies are working out, eating out, attending the theatre and reading plays ("My favorite playwrights are August Wilson and Athol Fugard.")

He is also deeply concerned with the state of Black gays today:

"We are out there and we can't be ignored. We are a vital part of the community and a vital part of the world.

"Also, as non-white people, we are presented with enough problems. We certainly don't need to discriminate among ourselves. Other people do enough of that for us."

Speak, Michael! And congratulations on being chosen SBC's December Man of Choice.



MICHAEL MITCHELL

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(Alyson Publications)

CAPTAIN SWING: A LOVE STORY *a novel by Larry Duplechamp*

Breathing hard. Standing at the gurney with the white, white sheet covering the body... Trembling. Looking down, watching, unable to look away as the sheet peels itself down, down, slowly.

"Keith's hair, stiff and matted. Keith's prominent brow, blackened and purpled with bruises. Keith's eyelids, sunken and bluish. Someone screaming.

"Someone was screaming and I suddenly realized it was me...

"I'd done this one before. But not in months. And never on a plane."

There is the thinnest of lines between the shattered heart's reality and the subconscious mind's Inferno. Sometimes it is a hairline fracture through which nightmare siphons reality, making random personal horror the standard for the day.

From word one of Larry Duplechan's lean Captain Swing: A Love Story, master jazz sanger, Johnnie Ray Rousseau's one life and two loves bleed onto the pages of one's mind like a Dexter Gordon tenor sax solo. Full of misty remembrance and muddy with the 9th Circle blues and flying blind solo. Full of sage and sweet/bittersweet, forbidden romance, much wisdom in its wake.

Johnnie, called Junie [a hybrid of his given name plus "Junior"], still mourning the hit-and-run death of the love of his life, and recovering from a minor drug dependency, journeys "down south" to Louisiana for the first time in fifteen years to make peace with his estranged and homophobic philanderer of a father, Lance (always bitterly referred to by first name in Johnnie's thoughts) who lies in a hometown hospital bed dying of cancer.

He steps off the plane and into the moist heat and meaty bosom of southern family where he learns to live and love again—in more ways than one.

They say you got to go down to rise above.

And "down" Duplechan does take our protagonist, Johnnie [sorry, but "Junie" is a wee bit too "Sabrina", OKAY?], into the moist heat, lower depths and meaty bosom of his ancestral home. There he reacquaints himself with and meets a menagerie of relatives, family friends and... The Local Children—cornbread fed and full of life.

But, first, let's meet the family into which he was born: the sweet scented and well-meaning Aunt Lucille and her ironically named daughter, Athena, paragon of friendship, but mother of wisdom—Nigel.

Ah yes, oh yes, hell yes... Nigel. Cousin Athena's eighteen-year-old son. Aunt Lucille's gran'baby. Johnnie's savvy beyond his out in-the-stix digs and innocently wise beyond his years [the way he brilliantly packages himself in Daisy Mae cut-offs, notwithstanding] second cousin with the nastyboy grin. Second cousin...

It is Nigel The Walking Wet Dream who serves as Johnnie's angel, guiding him through the labyrinth of his thick-and-spicy-as-Aunt-Lucille's-Gumbo family history and, ultimately, back to love and life.

Look, from the moment Nigel and Johnnie meet, we know what's going to happen between these gorgeous specimens, second-cousins or not. And, be sure, the action is hot and heavy. However... (pant, pant!) generously, Mr. Duplechan spares us the cutesy, romantic cat and mouse game. Instead, we get steamy love making where the love is genuine and thankfully lacking in crudery.

Anyway, it's a fam'ly affair. Family. Having met the one Johnnie was born into, let us meet The Other.

Anna Lee, Mr. Fitty and Mr. Freen. Forbidden fruit introduced by -who else?- Nigel. Anna Lee runs what seems to be a decidedly gay liquor-house and hangout which may or may not be or have been a bordello. In either case, it is definitely a house of ill-repute and much fun!

Monsieurs Freen and Fitty (cum-Frick and Frack/ cum Come 'ere and Git It!) are Anna Lee's dominoes playin umpteen-million-year old, ain't-even-got-enough-teeth-to-chew-water, flirtatious regulars.

Mr. Freen is super black, Mr. Fitty is super white-looking but ain't even tryin to pass. Like The Lord and His Main Man, Lucifer, they play their board games, bitch and moan and provide comic relief for Johnnie Rousseau, before surrendering some of the devastating truths that help him put his life back together.

Fortunately, Duplechan's writer's gifts and command of southern African-American vernacular and dialect help to give such incidental characters body, flesh and weight because their on-page time is limited.

Anyway, it is to the author's credit that Johnnie's prejudices against his country cousins become ours, too. Those same prejudices come back to haunt us with an ironic and mind-fucking twist, perhaps as intellectually romantic as the cousins' romance is physical. Yeah, it's one sexy brain-twister:

"Nigel rolled to one side of me, one leg across my hips-...

"I felt my skin vibrate like the filament in a light bulb under Nigel's touch, felt my nipples awaken and my spine involuntarily arch, even as a nagging gnome voice at the base of my skull, a voice simultaneously similar to my mother's, my fathers, and Athena's, said, You shouldn't be doing this. You shouldn't be letting your cousin lay all over you like this. Rubbin' on you and kissin' on you. You shouldn't. Then Nigel danced his fingertips over my nipples, making them jump up and shout, Hey! like two little James Browns. Suddenly I thought, "Fuck 'shouldn't."

Sookie, sookie, nayh!

Still, amid all the sparkle and the fun, and the Ha-ha Kee-kee, there is serious bi'ness to deal with. Throughout Captain Swing, Johnnie Rousseau is described as this fine-as-hell African-American, velvet-voiced, bi-tri-whatever-ripe-cepted god. Throughout, we are reminded again and again—and agin! that homeboy has this serious blond "fetish".

And, even though this is Black gay romance, a Black gay man's story, a Black story, there is this nagging suspicion that it is being Anglocentrically told by an African American gay man. In a nut shell: goddamn, those blond references were numerous, detailed and tedious, especially when we had been introduced to Nigel early on in all his magnificence down-home splendor and with a certain amount of intimacy.

Oh sure, there are references to Johnnie's past lovers with a touch of mocha thrown in here, a little ebony there. All unconvincingly. But, come on. Even the casual reader who's in The Life might wonder if it might be more politically astute to play the middle ground as a Black gay fiction writer. A writer who already has a large Anglo constituency and who is most certainly aware of the mushrooming Black gay movement / readership.

Who needs the blonds?!!

The references to them become increasingly awkward, dull and odd. Out of place. Worse. They are diverting in a Black gay romance!

If I sound strident, it may be because I like the writing here a lot. I like this story a lot. A hell of a lot, both. Both were cheapened by the blond thang. What should have been a great book by what should be a greater writer is merely an excellent and thoroughly enjoyable novel by a writer who's greater work is yet to come.

So, while Captain Swing will certainly have your nipples hollarin "Hey!", JB style, the hardest workin man in Black gay fiction is still yet to be found.

Bottom line: Will Captain Swing work your last nerve? How about your left nut? Will you be wrecked? Will you be erect? Yes. Yes. Naw... well, maybe. Pro'bly.

Granted, there are less qualified raves. But, there are also less knowing hands, less intuitive tongues than Nigel's and Johnnie's. Less well written romances than Captain Swing. But, few more entertaining.

Read the damn book.

You'll only be hot and bothered. And there are worse things.

{book & stage reviews by **GREGORY EUGENE TRAVIS** *, review editor]*

THE DIVA IS DISMISSED *a one-woman show starring Jenifer Lewis*

A diva is someone who pretends to know who they are—and looks fabulous doing it," proclaims our grand diva in residence, Ms. Jenifer Lewis, after belting out the opening number of her long running one woman cabaret style musical [which, in true diva fashion, she co-wrote, co-produced and composed].

Prowling the stage in Eartha Kitt/Catwoman-lounging-around-the-house black leotards, loose sweatshirt and sneakers, Lewis sings, dances, camps and vamps up a storm, dishing up her life like a favorite recipe.

None of this is surprising, of course, to her legions of cabaret fans in New York City, where the former Bette Midler Harlette has been called, "the reigning queen of high-camp cabaret." An accomplished actress, she has recently been seen in "What's Love Got To Do With It" (as Tina Turner's mother), "Poetic Justice" and "Sister Act II" with Whoopi Goldberg.

But none of that prepares you for Lewis' autobiographical tour de force life journey. Borrowing one page from "The Wizard Of Oz" and snatching another from Dickens' "A Christmas Carol", Lewis and co-writers Charles Randolph-Wright and Mark Alton Brown seamlessly weave together vignettes from her life with notable moments from her current and ongoing development as Head Goddess On Campus.

Lewis explains that a few years ago, after hitting a personal and professional nadir, she was awakened [in true diva fashion at 4pm] by an ethereal vision she calls "Ghost Girl" , an angelic Diva Goddess who guides her from awkward five-year-old diamond in the rough to arch divatude and self-acceptance. Particularly funny and poignant is her return to her hometown, Kenlock Missouri, for a Christmas party in her honor. Lewis' embodiment of each party guest as she reacquaints herself with them is absolutely mesmerizing.

Ms. Lewis earned her title this evening, however, through an impromptu and blistering snap and read administered after an audience member's beeper sounded during one of the show's best numbers. Lewis stops the song, stops the dance, stops the music and slowly, very slowly looks over her shoulder until she spots her prey- a petrified blond trying to discreetly silence the offending appendage. Like a cat with a trapped mouse, a smiling Lewis bounds over with a grin and demands the beeper, then tells her patron to leave the theater: in effect, dismissing the lesser diva. It's all done in the name of fun.

And fun, it is. Though "Diva..." is part cabaret/part one-woman-show, Lewis' energy, wit, grace and raw talent help transcend the "showcase" genre.

And we must give respect to that amazing voice. Let's just say that she is one of the few singers who doesn't sound silly when citing Aretha as an influence. This Diva can sang!

She even manages to make the show's sentimental theme—you are nothing without someone you love—-sound like a hallmark card sentiment delivered by a saloon hall madam with a heart of gold.

In the end, it's obvious that Ms. Lewis knows exactly what she's doing. And yes she looks fabulous doing it. Better than that, though, you leave the theater feeling fabulous for having come along for the ride.

Oh, and don't be fooled by the title. A true diva can never be dismissed!

(7:30 PM SUNDAYS ONLY THRU DECEMBER 19TH / HUDSON BACKSTAGE THEATER / 6539 SANTA MONICA BLVD./ HOLLYWOOD, CA./ TICKETS $20/ INFORMATION: 213.660.8587)

Music views and *re*views

NEFERTITI: THE LATEST AMERICAN GRIOT

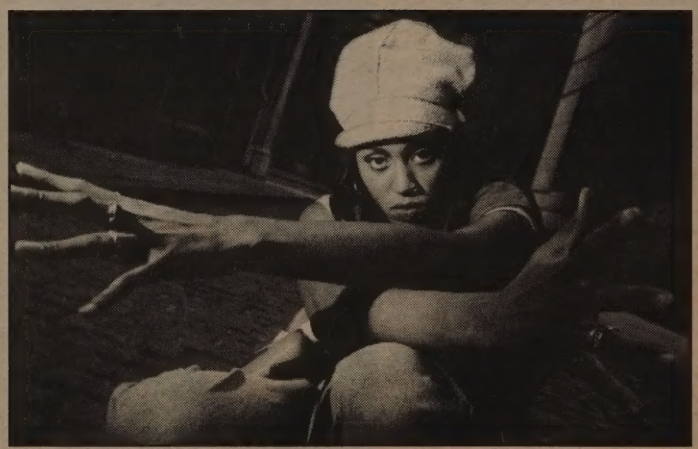
Hats off to Mercury Records recording artist, Nefertiti. The 20 year old, tall and regal rapper was introduced to the LA press at a lavish but intimate reception at the Bel Age Hotel last month. And when she addressed the crowd treating us to an impromptu performance of the rhymes from her first single, "Miss Amutha Nature", she ended any speculation as to whether or not Nefertiti "can hang". This young lady can do more than hang, and she is destined to be a strong force in the rap music industry.

Inside rap circles, Nefertiti has remained one of the most well known female rappers for the last four years, in spite of the fact that she has yet to release an album. Her debut project is described in her press kit as "a dark blend of politics, black nationalism, and revolution". Judging by the tracks sampled at the reception, her music is as hard-hitting as one of her mentors and producers, Professor Griff. Whether praising her own black womanhood ("Miss Amutha Nature"), making a revolutionary call to arms ("Mecca To Watts"), or grieving the loss of rap artist MC Trouble ("Trouble In Paradise"), Nefertiti strongly believes in her "words and poetry".

"I'm trying to deal with everything, but the basis of all is L.I.F.E. We as black people are not going to die of old age; we're gonna die of the bullet, of fuckin' AIDS. As young kids, what the fuck do we have to look forward to other than our death?" she says. Thus her album is aptly titled, L.I.F.E: Living In Fear of Extinction.

"We as rappers need to be connected; we're the power. The kids are listening to us. I want to bring that power to the forefront, making it known and understood by society," she explained at the reception. "Rappers are poets...griots".

Her debut album hits record stores in February.



by **PATRIK-IAN POLK,** Music Editor

JODY WATLEY

On a recent late night visit to Larry Parker's, the trendy Beverly Hills eatery, I sat with an actress friend staring intently at the TV monitor showing a series of clips from the old "Soul Train" dance lines of the early 70's. "Do you know who that is?" she asked pointing at the screen. Imagine my amazement when down the row of funky, psychedelically dressed dancers comes a young Miss Jody Watley, complete with huge blue jean bell bottoms and afro-puffed hair! This was a real treat for someone like me, too young to have witnessed these gems of 70's culture in their original airings, but old enough to have enjoyed Jody's musical career from her seven years with Shalamar to her three solo albums.

Even then, dancing on "Soul Train" at the tender age of 15, you could see the intense concentration on her face, that perfectionist quality exhibited by most Aquarians. It is this quality that forced her to flee her creatively stifling position in Shalamar and strike out on her own. It is this quality that made her solo debut a Grammy winning, multi-platinum success. It is this quality that made her a "fashion provocateur and trend-setter" prompting Vanity Fair to write in a 1991 article, "Her knack for reinvention has always complemented her music". And it is this perfectionist quality that makes her latest album Intimacy her most accomplished to date.

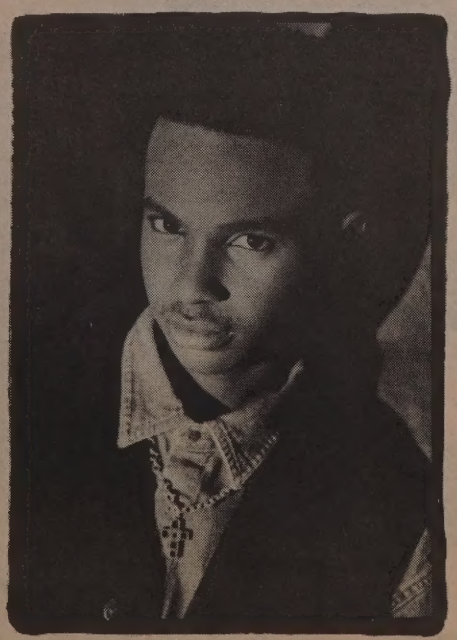
"Angst-ridden romantic soul with a funky elegance" is how Miss Watley describes the project which features ten tracks, half of which are produced by Jody's longtime companion (professionally and personally) Andre' Cymone. [The two recently saw the birth of their first child together, Arie (Jody's second).] Musically, the album is warmer and more groove-oriented than her previous efforts. Standout cuts include "To Be With You", featuring a vocally loose Watley and "Together", a jazzy number with a funky flute solo. Recalling the pre-rap 70's monologues of Isaac Hayes, "When A Man Loves A Woman" combines a hip-hop rhythm with Jody's spoken ruminations of true love. The result: imagine Madonna's "Justify My Love" if it had a shred of intelligence or musical integrity. Intimacy also features three nice ballads including "Take Me In Your Arms", Jody's first real R&B ballad, and "Too Shy To Say", a touching and vulnerable cover of the early Stevie Wonder classic. Closing out the album is the beautiful and lilting "Best of Me", perhaps the best song of the bunch. Musically, and (more notably) vocally, Jody Watley continues to exhibit the growth, maturity, and intimacy we have come to expect of her.

So, what's next on Miss Watley's agenda? Acting! The 34 year old diva says motion pictures are definitely a part of her future, even if she has to write them herself. Go on girl!

TEVIN CAMPBELL

He's cute. He's sexy, and he's got a voice as pretty as young Michael Jackson with the agility and range of Whitney and Stevie. He's also only sixteen years old, so all you pedophiles out there be warned...jailbait! However, there's no law that prevents you from getting off on the boy's music.

Tevin's sophomore effort, "I'm Ready", is an impressive compilation of rather adult melodies and themes guaranteed to bring even the staunchest critics to new heights of ecstasy. Just one listen to the almost X-rated "Shhh" (written and produced by the deliciously nasty Prince) and you'll be moaning right along with the French girl in the song, as Tevin coos: "I'd rather do you after school like homework/Am I gettin' you hot?/In my bedroom? No! 'Cuz then we'd have to stop/I'd rather wait 'til everyone's fast asleep/Then do it in the kitchen on the table top!" Amen hallelujah! Prince (or whatever the hell you call him) is on the money with this one as well as the funky jam, "Uncle Sam", an indictment of the United States' treatment of the black man. But what in the hell are those strange Prince tracks, "Paris 1798430" and "The Halls of Desire"? To his credit, Tevin (with that amazing voice) can make even these Princely oddities sound credible, but he seems most at home on the cuts produced by the more mainstream Narada Michael Walden and Babyface. Although Walden's work here is his best in quite a while ("Brown Eyed Girl" and "What Do I Say"), the Babyface tracks reign supreme. From the slammin' first single, "Can We Talk" (currently burning up the pop and R&B charts) to the beautiful melodies of "I'm Ready" and "Always In My Heart", Babyface proves once again that he is, by far, the most skillful and prolific producer today and seems to enjoy rising (no pun intended) to the occasion of a stellar vocal talent like Tevin Campbell. One complaint: Tevin's vocal stylings seem to be lifted straight form the book of Whitney. Although Whitney's technique is certainly something to aspire to, Tevin seems to be imitating her rather than incorporating her style into one of his own. But he is, after all, only sixteen. I'm sure that in time and with experience, he will develop his own vocal signature. And, even though it may be similar to Ms. Houston's, he will have learned to make it distinctive and recognizably his. Nevertheless, this young man is sure to be breakin' the hearts of men and women alike. And why not? He's gotten off to such an early start.



THIS IS MARIAH CAREY?

Mariah Carey's video for "Hero," her latest single, is probably her worst yet. In this "live" video taken from her NBC Thanksgiving special, "This Is Mariah Carey", the young pop songstress' on-stage singing is as pedestrian and unemotional as ever. Without a doubt, Ms. Carey is a more-than-competent singer. She simply lacks the stage presence and spontaneity necessary to pull off a live performance. You can see her concentrating solely on vocal technique and paying no

attention to emotional detail. Adding to the almost laughable performance of this piece are the various audience members unlucky enough to fill the front rows of this "concert". As the "mesmerized" fans sway back and forth reaching out for their high priestess of song, it becomes obvious that something is amiss. Then, after a few more crowd shots, it is evident - there are no black people in that audience! A newspaper article on Ms. Carey explained that the first eight rows of tickets for the special "concert" were distributed among members of her fan club. So, what does this reveal about her loyal following? Nothing too surprising in light of the fact that she never claims any ethnic identity unless it's convenient or profitable for her. In mainstream interviews, Mariah always talks about her Irish-American mother but rarely mentions her Venezuelan father...unless it's to highlight his paltry presence in her life. Of course, when doing an article in Ebony or Jet, she freely admits having a black-Venezuelan father. And, although she never speaks of a Latina identity (even though her dad is South American), a recent news report on a local LA television station spotlighting successful Latino entertainers mentioned Ms. Carey right alongside the likes of Gloria Estefan and Julio Iglesias, who have unequivocal Latino roots. All this ethnic identification of Mariah Carey is very troubling since her only interest in black people seems to be using them to make her background vocals sound credible. Likewise, because R&B music has come to rule the pop charts, it makes strategic sense for Ms. Carey to avow her connection to the black community at the outset of her career. Given the preponderant influence of rhythm & blues on the pop music industry, she can use her father's identity as a claim to R&B authenticity! But one look at her stiff "live" performance in the video quickly exposes the fraudulence of that claim. While her gospel-inflected technique is solid, Mariah Carey simply lacks soul.

ANGIE AND DEBBIE

Who would've thought that there was any more fruit left for picking on the Winans family tree? But gospel's first family has done it again with the stellar debut album of the youngest Winans siblings, Angie and Debbie. To get an idea of the vocal stylings of this duo, just imagine Whitney Houston and Toni Braxton as a duo...literally. Angie Winans' voice is stunningly similar in tone, range and style to the voice of Whitney Houston while her sister Debbie's voice is reminiscent of Toni Braxton's thicker and somewhat lower tone. The impeccably produced album is a delightful mix of contemporary gospel and R&B with hip-hop and pop accents. From the light New Jack Swing of the first single, "Light of Love" (featuring Whitney Houston on background vocals) to the powerhouse pop/R&B ballad, "Love Stays" (written by Bebe Winans), this album has it all...Straight up, Hip-hop numbers: "Flashback" and "Brand New Dance". Smooth R&B swing: "What A Place" and "Father Father" (featuring Stephanie Mills on background). And, perhaps, one of the most beautiful ballads of the year, "Why Won't You Let Me Love You" (written and performed by Angie Winans). This last song especially, reveals exactly how much Angie's voice resembles Whitney's and Cece's-that crystal clear tone, that gospel technique, that emotion. Obviously, growing up in the faces of such talented recording artists as the Winans, Vicki Winans, and Bebe & Cece Winans has its advantages because Angie and Debbie exhibit all the soulful and heartfelt vocal prowess of their siblings.

CASSANDRA WILSON: SWEET AS HONEY

Cassandra Wilson is a difficult artist to categorize. Although she records on the Blue Note Label, traditionally a jazz label, her music is rooted in everything from blues and funk to R&B to folk and rock.

The first song on her ninth album ("Blue Light 'til Dawn) is a rendition of the standard "You Don't Know What Love Is". The production is sparse featuring only a string guitar, a haunting violin solo, and her voice giving an instant impression of what kind of artist Cassandra Wilson is-"great interpreter of songs". The daughter of jazz guitarist and bassist Herman B. Fowlkes, Cassandra grew up in Jackson, Mississippi listening to music as varied as from her father's extensive jazz library to the ever-popular Motown and R&B. A musician since the age of six, Wilson re-interprets songs as diverse as the Stylistics' "Children of the Night", Joni Mitchell's "Black Crow", and two bluesy Robert Johnson classics, "Come On In My Kitchen" and "Hellhound On My Trail", and serves up a breathtaking a capella vocal (performing all voices through overdubbing) on her beautiful original tune, "Sankofa". One of the more exceptional covers is of the Van Morrison classic, "Tupelo Honey". Here especially, her silky smooth voice (not unlike Anita Baker's or the late Sarah Vaughn's) seems most convincing. "You're as sweet as Tupelo Honey", she sings. And she could just as easily be describing herself.

EN VOGUE: FUNKY INDEED

When I noticed the En Vogue EP "Runaway Love" a few weeks ago, I was beside myself anticipating another delicious offering from this queenly quartet coming off the stellar "Funky Divas" album. Now, I love En Vogue just as much as the next punk, and "Runaway Love" and "Whattaman" (with Salt N Pepa) are excellent songs. But what on earth made these four women and their record company think that an EP featuring two new singles and a couple of remixes of some really old ones justified a price tag of $11.99?

A note to the Funky Divas: This expensive-ass EP is real funky. Air freshener, anyone?

WHO TOLD LUTHER HE WAS A DIVA?

While we're on the subject of En Vogue, have you heard about the backstage feuding between them and Luther Vandross during their recent concert tour? Here's the dish: Luther got mad because En Vogue decided to sing to taped music instead of the live band. The women said that was because the band was blocking the audience's view of their performance. Then, Luther had big curtains put up backstage separating his area from their area. Then, Luther got mad when he caught one of the Funky Divas in his area. Then, Luther barred his crew from eating with their crew. Finally, fed up with the whole thing, En Vogue decided to cancel their remaining dates and leave Luther's tour. Now Luther, you know better! First, he was fighting backstage with Anita Baker a few years ago and now this! The Funky Divas even thought up a little nickname for him. They call him Lucifer! I just have one question: Who told Luther Vandross he was a diva?! I mean, who does he think he is...Diana Ross?

tevin campell photo by scott schafer; mariah carey photo by daniela federici; cassandra wilson photo by chris callas; jody watley photo courtesy mca records; nefertiti photo by carl posey; angie & debbie photo by randee st. nicholas

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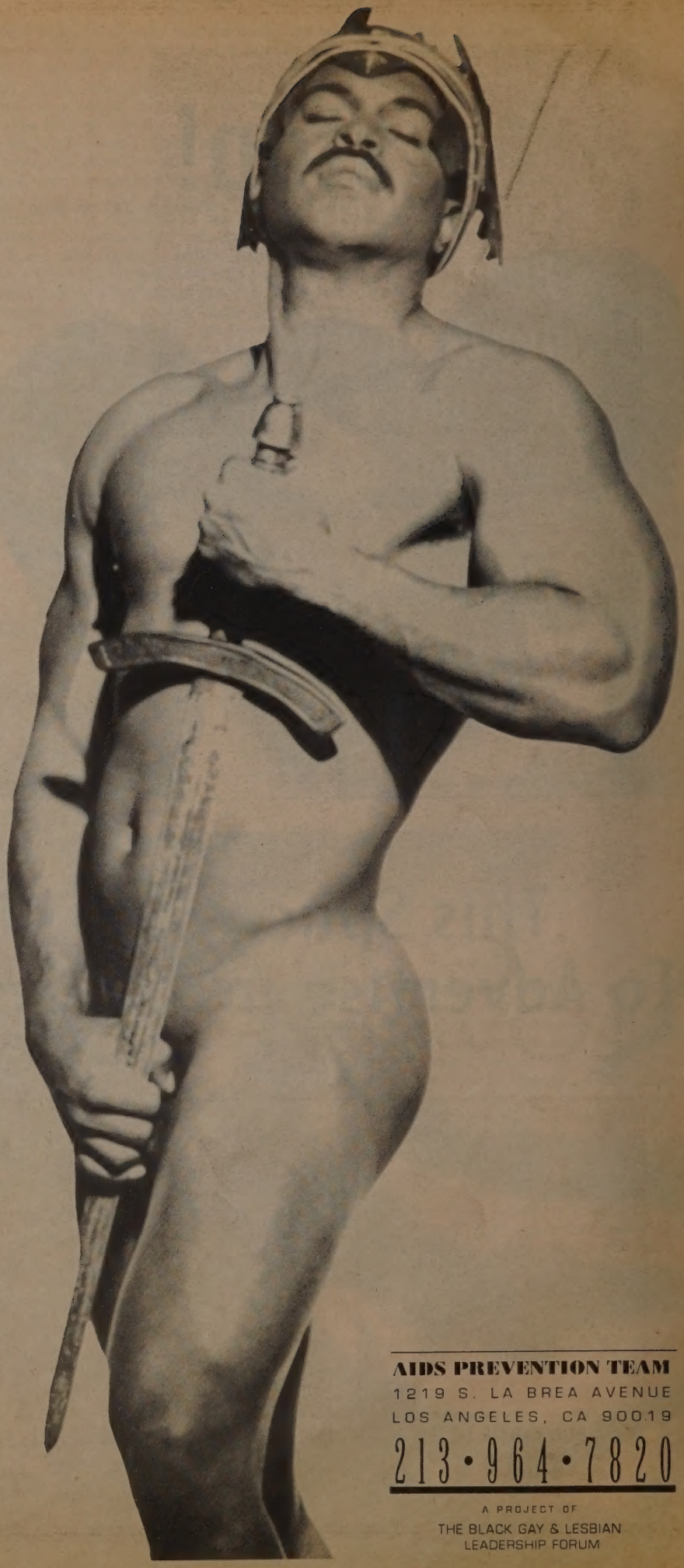

AIDS PREVENTION TEAM
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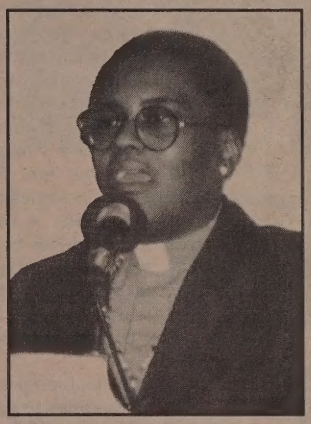

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ELDER ZACHARY JONES
Founding Pastor,
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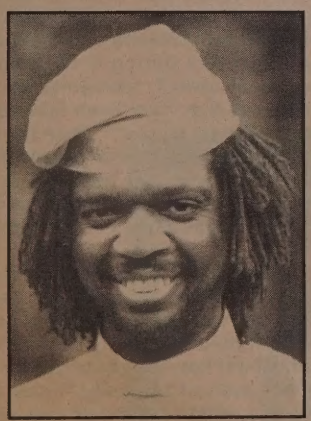

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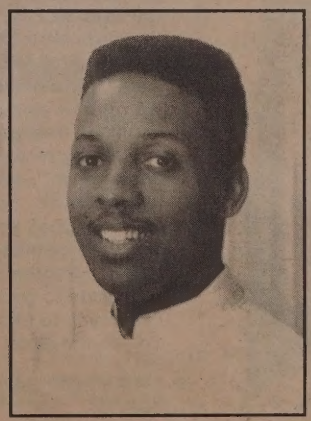

DARREN McCARROL-JONES
Minister of Music,
Mother Church, Los Angeles
National Musical Director

Unity Fellowship Church

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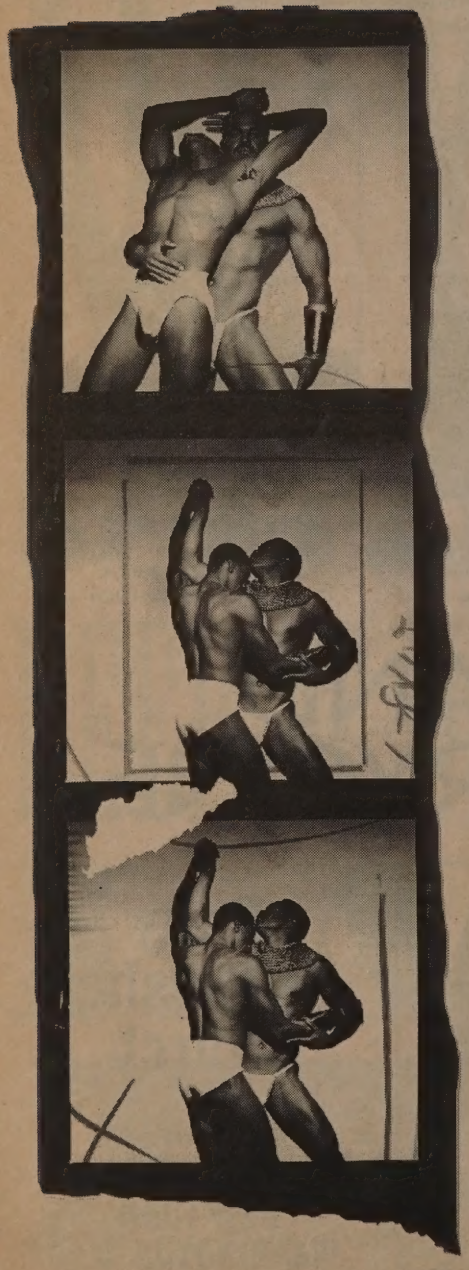
DETROIT
NEW YORK
WASHINGTON, D.C.



THE AIDS PREVENTION TEAM'S GRIOT

by Blaine Teamer / *Treatment Advocate*

The griot is a question-and-answer column designed to help brothers and sisters with their problems or concerns around physical, mental and spiritual healing for HIV and AIDS. Answers to all questions are thoroughly researched and, if necessary, checked with medical doctors, psychiatrists, sociologists and other experts. If you have questions, please send them to Blaine Teamer, Treatment Advocate, The AIDS Prevention Team, 1219 S. LaBrea, Los Angeles, CA 90019. Only the initials and the cities of those submitting questions will be published. Because of the large volume of mail we receive, we cannot send personal replies.

Dear Blaine:

Can you get hepatitis from eating butt? I just want to know. My roommate has hepatitis now, and he's always sneaking in some type of nasty trade. I know for a fact that he tosses salad. I think that's how he got it, eating dirty ass. I told "her" point blank how I thought "she" got it. She didn't believe me. I laughed in her face and said "fine bitch". We haven't spoken since.

Sincerely,

U.R. WHATUEAT.
RESEDA, CA

My Dear Brother U.R.:

"Can you get hepatitis from eating butt?" You ain't one to sugar coat nothing are you? I love it. Yes you can get hepatitis from..."eating dirty ass". You can get many things from eating a dirty ass. My thing is do you buy collard greens and just throw them in a pot and cook 'em? No. You clean 'em. Better yet. Do you buy a bucket of chittlins and pour some vinegar on them and just stew 'em? No, you clean 'em. So tell him if he's going to put his mouth in somebody's ass, "she" needs to make sure it's clean. A stank ass is stank 'cause of one reason. He needs to put trade in the shower, get a rag, some soap and go for what he knows. It can be sensual and clean. He can be extra safe by using a dental dam (a latex barrier). Let you're roommate know that safety and being erotic is not mutually exclusive.

Hepatitis is an acute chronic inflammation of the liver. It is easier to get than HIV and million of folks are infected with it and don't know it. The virus can be spread through shit - mouth contact, spit, body fluids, semen, vaginal secretions and unknown exposures (i.e. counter tops)

I was at a college recently, and a young sister said if she got infected (with HIV) she wouldn't want to know. Apparently, the message has not gotten out. The longer you neglect something the worse it gets. It's important that you get tested regularly. The symptoms for hepatitis are: fatigue, mild fever, muscle and joint aches, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal discomfort and color changes in your urine, stool, eyes and skin. Currently, there is a vaccine for B. I suggest that you get vaccinated for it. There are five strains of the virus: A, B, C, D and E. Regardless of the strain. there are basic things that can help with recovery. Get plenty of rest, keep away from street drugs and booze, increase fiber intake, get follow-up care, and realize that immunity from one type of strain is not immunity from all.

Apologize to your roommate for calling him a "nasty bitch". Also, saying "nasty trade" sounds so judgmental. Somebody may bring you home thinking that you're "nasty trade". You never know. Remember Love, that one person's "nasty trade" is another's culinary cuisine. Encourage your roommate to get more information in regards to his health and to take better care of himself.

You do the same.

AFRICAN PROVERB:"ONE CAMEL DOES NOT MAKE FUN OF ANOTHER CAMEL'S HUMP" —GUINEA

Dear Blaine:

I have three questions I want to ask you. First, what do you think about the combination of gene therapy with liposomes. Second, what is the possibility of monoclonal antibodies and Doxorucibin being used against Karposi Sarcoma and other AIDS related cancers? Finally, is curcumin a low cost antiviral or not?

LMR
DALLAS, TX

Dear LMR:

Golly! Let's see, I'll take the last question first. Curcumin is a spice that is used in tumeric. Tumeric is the spice that makes curry yellow. Search Alliance (vol. 3, Issue 4) reported that when Africans and Indians were examined, Africans were ten times more likely to be HIV infected, despite comparable risk behaviors. The large amounts of tumeric ingested by the Indian population have been suggested as a possible cultural factor that could be providing antiviral protection.

We have always known the healing powers of herbs and spices, i.e. ginger, licorice, cinnamon, etc. They are also very economical and can easily be incorporated into our diets. Some folks in San Francisco tried it and reported drops in their p24 antigen. This is good news; however, studies will have to be done to get a thorough understanding of how best to use curcumin. Search Alliance is starting a clinical trial in Los Angeles. It will be an eight week study, with subjects having between 50 - 400 T cells. They will be given 885 mg. of curcumin three times a day. For more information on this study call 213. 930.8820.

In regards to Karposi Sarcoma, really good things are being said about liposomal encapsulated chemotherapy agents. They may prove to be less toxic and more effective. This approach uses chemotherapy agents enclosed in liposomes (extremely small fat cells), which allow for a greater concentration of the drug to reach the targeted K.S. cells and decrease the toxicity to the rest of the body. A small phase II study presented at the Berlin conference demonstrated that liposomal daunorubicin (Daunoxome) is an effective treatment for K.S. with minimal toxicity. Two other German studies confirmed the safety and efficacy of Doxil in patients with advanced K.S. Doxil is liposomal coated adriamycin. Daunoxome is liposomal coated bleomycin. Currently phase III studies are opening up in Southern California, for more information you can call USC, Sue Cabriales, at 213.343.8270

In regards to gene therapy, the hot new approach that is winning mega praise is ribozyme-based gene therapy. Dr. Flossie Wong-Staal and her research team at the University of San Diego have got the seal of approval from the National Institute of Health's Recombinant DNA Advisory Committee during it's September 9-10 meetings. In a nutshell, rybozymes are pieces of genetic material that have been labeled by some people as "molecular scissors". Once the ribozymes get inside the cells, it cuts the genetic material of HIV into useless pieces. The hypothesis is that cells treated with ribozyme will be safely protected in patients with HIV infection. Phase I studies are set to begin.

All of these things are very cutting edge and look very promising. I suggest you and other people who are interested give these trial sites a call. Find out if these studies are taking place where you are, and if not how you can access the drug and or the latest results of the study. I must commend you on your question. It shows that you have a great deal of knowledge in regards to this disease. I may be calling you to ask you some stuff.

word-up

Colon cleanser - Jarrodophillus, Beet Fiber, Psyllium Husk, Potassium.

Diarrhea - Charcoal, Kelp Potassium

Immune Stimulant - Astragalus, Pau D'Arco, Immune Pak

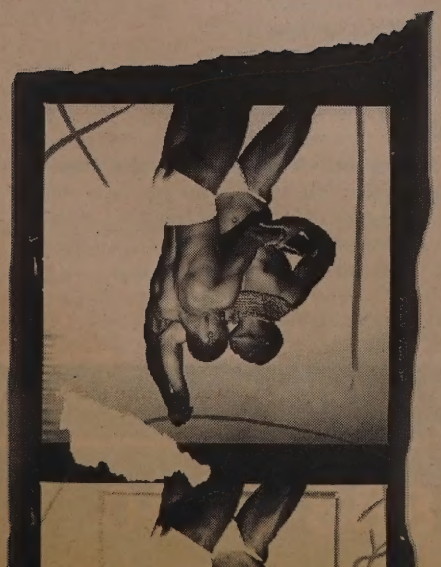
P-24 antigen - a protein component of the core of HIV. A positive result for the p 24 antigen suggests active HIV replication.

The purpose of the AIDS Prevention Team (APT) is to provide AIDS education about prevention, early intervention and treatment options. APT articulates the voice of the often silent portion of the African American community which is HIV infected. It is this articulation that will eventually lead us into aborting this pandemic and proclaiming that we will be here for the cure.

Services provided by the APT:

Holistic counseling	Aerobic & Yoga classes
Support Groups	Treatment Advocacy
Town Meeting	Medical Referrals

APT is a project of The Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum. For more information about all of the services that we provide, call 213.964-7820



"Hey Brother. We have a lot to talk about!"

Real friendships start with a hello.
Say hello to your brothers at the Black Gay Men's Rap.

The Black Gay Men's Rap

Every Friday at 7 p.m.
Unity Fellowship Center, 5149 W. Jefferson., Los Angeles
213/936-4948

HIV-POSITIVE MEN OF COLOR

NEEDED FOR

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UCLA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

AND MINORITY AIDS PROJECT

are offering a free 12-week intensive group therapy program to HIV-positive gay or bisexual men for a study designed to determine whether group therapy has psychological, immunological, and health benefits.

We are seeking volunteers ages 25-45 who have had some HIV-related symptoms but who are not diagnosed with AIDS. Groups will be led by mental health professionals with extensive experience with HIV. Research participants will provide six blood samples over the course of one year.

Two groups are currently forming, one to be conducted at UCLA, and one to be conducted at Minority AIDS Project in Los Angeles.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL:

CHRIS HART OR AVA STANTON

(310) 206-7870

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Friday, December 10, 1993 • 8:00 PM - 2:00 AM

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The Award-Winning Musical Choreo-Poem

The Great American Swing Band
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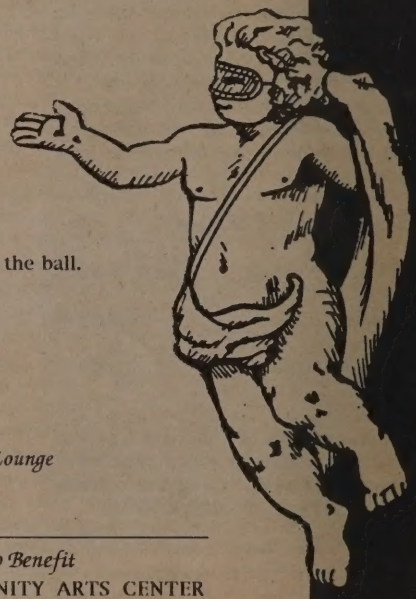
The Johnny Depp Clones
"Who says gay boys can't rock!"

Special Guest Performance
Guaranteed to bring the house down!



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333 South Boylston @ 3rd Street

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V.I.P. Supporters & Patrons will be served a Buffet Dinner in the V.I.P. Lounge
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Theme: A "Venetian-Style" Ball
Attire: Festive, Flamboyant, With A Touch of Class

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TICKETS ARE LIMITED TO THE CAPACITY OF GLAM SLAM

HOTLINE: (213) 883-1630

[Afrocentrically Yours}

by Kheven LaGrone

One day while waiting for my mother to finish shopping, I wandered into the store's fragrance department. I was immediately greeted by an attractive, impeccably groomed Black woman. She smiled and asked if she could help me. Her voice was warm and friendly. I felt welcomed. In that same pleasant voice, she showed me several different fragrances.

She eventually found a fragrance that I loved. She made me feel so good, I wanted to buy at least one bottle of cologne specifically from her. I wanted this Black woman to have my support and money. I wanted her to know it. I wanted the company to know it. When I buy fragrances again, I won't shop around. I'll go straight to her. I've told all my fragrance purchasing friends as well.

She demonstrated good salesmanship.

Unfortunately, I do not always leave a store as a happy customer. I have shopping horror stories.

Needing assistance, I walked up to the counter of a local music store. The man was obviously enjoying a personal phone conversation. He seemed nice when he covered the phone and asked me what I needed. When I told him, he vaguely pointed toward a display of CD's and promptly continued his conversation. I looked up at the display and could find the CD nowhere. I looked up at him. He was too busy enjoying his conversation. He did not notice my trying to catch his eye for better directions.

I walked back to the counter. He continued his conversation. Out of the corner of my eye I saw the row of CD's where I should have been directed (if this sales clerk had spared a few moments of his time to assist a customer). A friend and I looked for the artist's name. We could not find the CD under his last initial. Another sales clerk walked by talking to a couple of girls. We asked him where was the artist's new CD. He did not say "just a minute" or "I'll be with you in a moment". "I'm gonna let you look a little while longer for that CD," he yelled back as he continued walking, "because when I show it to you, you're gonna feel like a real fool."

Wherever that CD was, I decided to buy it elsewhere. I decided to buy ALL my CD's elsewhere.

Had these sales clerks-from-hell forgotten that I was a CUSTOMER?
Did management forget to inform them that I was the money—the lifeblood—of ANY business?

This particular music store is close to my home. It has excellent parking. But my friends and I usually drive out to Berkeley (where parking is terrible) for a more enjoyable music shopping experience. Now I remembered why we never shopped here. This store always has "attitude".

I do not pay for "attitude".

Understand that when I'm spending MY money, I don't need to snap my fingers or "go off" on sales clerks-from-hell. I don't "act ugly". Why "clown" myself? Why snatch up some big-mouthed muthafucka and whip his li'l ass? A simple letter to management should do.

I encountered another "sales clerk-from hell" at a soul food restaurant. The restaurant had signs announcing that it would no longer have Saturday hours. "You can't close on Saturdays" I joked to the woman behind the counter, "This is my favorite restaurant. I love coming here on Saturdays." She didn't smile. She didn't even look up. She just grumbled something to the effect that it was my problem.

I stopped raving about that restaurant—all I could talk about was that woman's nasty attitude.

And I eventually stopped going to that restaurant because whenever I'd see her, I'd think about her attitude.

One time after this experience I went to that restaurant with two friends—one of whom was white. The other friend was a Black man who had also experienced this woman's attitude. I only chose the restaurant because of convenience. Ironically, she didn't have that attitude toward our white friend. The Black man and I stood there speechless as she grinned and jokingly explained to the White man what "corn muffins"—not corn bread—were. Maybe she thought "white" money was greener than mine—though I had bought the more expensive meal.

The manager of my now favorite restaurant greeted me at the door "Hey where you been, I haven't seen you in a while?" As always, he served me promptly. As always, the food was good. When I left he yelled to me "Come back soon—you've been gone too long!"

That's salesmanship. I will be back soon.

Such salesmanship makes me want to come back. It makes me feel good about spending my money. I don't need such foolishness as a gum smackin', eye rollin' sales clerk. In a previous issue of SBC, DC Correspondent Mark Johnson writes about a club where the owners didn't include Black men in its ads and commented that Black people don't read. Should I party there? If I do, I'll feel like one of dem po' fools whose money the owner takes for granted.

The television character Shenaynay from the Martin Lawrence Show, may be sassy and flippant at home. But in one episode, she demonstrated salesmanship skills when running her beauty salon. She did not allow Gina, another character, to upset her customers. Each customer was money. With no customers, she has no business. A repeat customer was repeat money. Each customer must leave satisfied.

Shenaynay must know that old saying "the customer is always right". There's nothing to stop a displeased customer from taking her money to the next beauty salon.

So Shenaynay catered to each customer's gripe. All gum smackin', neck twistin' and smart mouth were left at home.

Customers are vital to any business. When I walk into a business establishment, I am offering them the opportunity to RECEIVE my money. A sales clerk's welcoming smile is the least show of appreciation.

Black people could use good salesmanship to lure outside money into our community. Our business could use good salesmanship to keep money in our community. I know about "funky" customers who's got "funky" attitudes and "don't want to spend no money". But that ain't no Black thang. That is business.

Good salesmanship means turning "funky" customers into satisfied customers. Good salesmanship is selling cologne to a potential customer who was just wandering around, waiting for his mother to finish shopping. Good salesmanship is making that customer feel good about his shopping experience.

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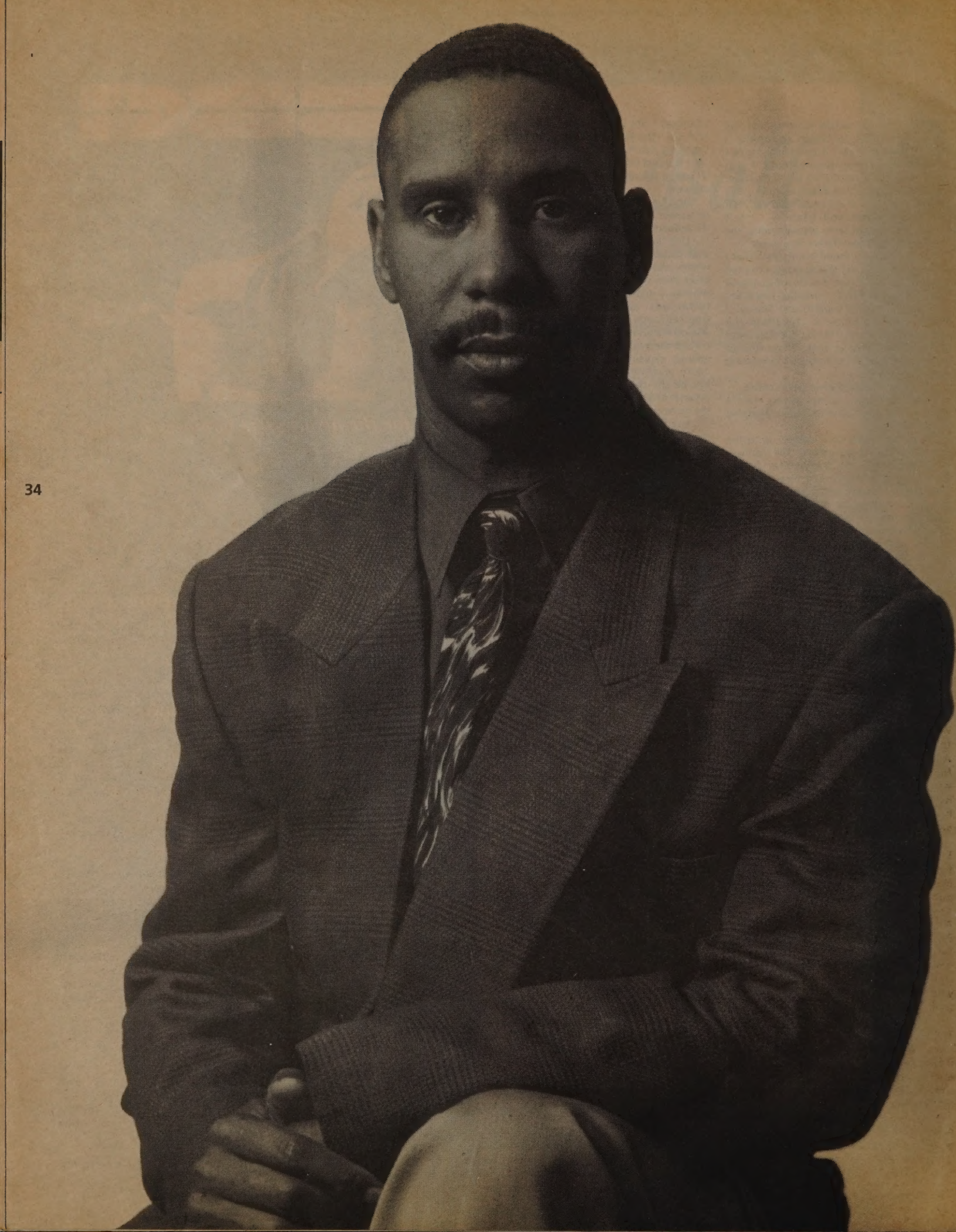

BLACK, GAY AND ON THE GO: Duane Bremond

by Stanley Bennett Clay

photography by Tri Tran

In the ever-changing, but always powerful political circles of L.A., there are many eyes on 30 year old Duane Bremond. His knowledge of the process, after many years as congressional aid to popular and powerful Congresswoman Maxine Waters, his prestigious pedigree—his late father founded The Brotherhood Crusade—and his agile leadership ability, knowing when to cross swords and knowing when to compromise, lend credence to the rumors that he is being groomed to challenge the Los Angeles Council seat of the innocuous incumbent Nate Holden, a spook-who-sat-by-the door politico whose pro-Darryl Gates stance at the height of the Rodney King/LAPD debacle, those nasty sexual harassment allegations and his living outside of his district have eroded what little support he had left.

But right now—to Holden's immediate and temporary relief, public office is not on Duane Bremond's mind, although not far from it. APLA's public policy is.

A persuasive and charming Afrocentric homosexual, Duane is concentrating on his new duties at AIDS Project L.A., the cash rich, publicity rich, political rich nonprofit organization known primarily for its service to the white Hollywood elite community where most of the Blacks in position are black in skin tone only.

The presence of Duane Bremond as the Director of Community Relations in APLA's Public Policy Department is a much needed and welcomed addition to the basic good APLA does and is a first step in showing that APLA has finally decided to reach out to the Afrocentric community.

And Duane Bremond knows the community well. "I grew up in an activist family," he recalls. "It was always about doing for the community, to contribute to the good of all of us, not just some of us."

Duane, along with his personal companion of 6 years, Will Harris, devotes much of his time to volunteer service for such organizations as the National Council of Negro Women, The Minority AIDS Project and The Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, and he knows that that ongoing participation in those community-building organizations will come in handy as he faces the challenge of bridging the gap when it comes to AIDS and HIV education, health care, support and money.

"It's time for all of us to reach out to each other," he states emphatically from his new office in the newly dedicated APLA building on Vine Street in Hollywood, a far cry from the Maxine Waters Congressional facilities located in South Central Los Angeles where he used to work. "African Americans are still dying at an alarming rate from AIDS-related conditions. I just thank God for what Bishop Bean is doing for our community through the Minority AIDS Project. And I see no reason why APLA can't work right along with MAP and other community-based organization in a unified effort to eradicate this disease from our community as well as the world."

Duane is also one of the founders and directors of ATB, the 5 year old annual Fourth of July Malibu Beach party that this past year drew some 5,000 Black gays and lesbians.

And now that ATB is holding monthly high-consciousness talk shows, fashioned after Ric Irick's Washington D.C.-based events where a moderator keeps a lively, sometimes funny, always thought-provoking dialogue going, ATB is successfully meshing the social and the political, two strong but often disparate aspects of the community.

"ATB is a way to get us all together. This is a way to network. ATB is the largest venue African American gays and lesbians have to come together, especially in this kind of social atmosphere. It actually gives you a sense of peace and harmony and the feeling that one gets when they're out there (on the beach) is not like I've seen before.

"I would like to include more political consciousness in a way where we can develop voter information situations, and ways to let our people know who and how their elected officials are.

"The power that we have as African American gays and lesbians is astronomical and we don't always recognize our power. When I look at what's happening at At The Beach—5,000 of us—I see power.

"We have to develop an awareness of what's going on around us.

"We spend billions of dollars nationwide. African American gays and lesbians have probably the highest per capita income per year of any other group. And we spend. Black folks spend their money."

Duane is a firm believer in political, social and economic power and knows that by bringing all of these to the table, the power of black gays ad lesbians, the black community for that matter, is unstoppable.

And Duane, happy in love, happy in life and happy with a mission, will not be stopped either.

According to recent data from The Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum, Los Angeles' 90019 zip code contains the highest residential concentration of black gays and lesbians of any zip code in the country.

This is also the cradle of incumbent Nate Holden's council district...for now.

CALIFORNIA

ROOMMATE WANTED. Afrocentric Gay Male seeks roommate to share four room flat near Lake Merritt in Oakland. $200. First and last required. Non-smoker. William. 5

BLACK PROFESSIONAL BODYBUILDER, mature, seeks live-in Man Friday in exchange for room and board. I'm a healthy non-smoker with varied interest including music and opera; currently I'm studying voice. I seek a mature Black man to handle correspondence and the telephone, generally acting as a protective shield against social and casual distractions. You are perhaps of retirement age and have another source of income. You are responsible, patient, willing to pitch in, a non-smoker and willing to move to Palm Springs. If you're serious about companionship, and willing to work in exchange for meals and a place to live. Please write Hank, Box 654, Palm Springs, CA 92262.

EXHIBITIONISTS UNITE: amateur photographer looking for in-shape, well endowed Blacks and Latinos for models. Trade photos (artistic only) for your time. Shots a la Ritts, Weber. Show me what you have! Call Ted : 213.224.0243.

GBM, 47, wants to meet 40+ GBM. Serious only. Answer machine: 619.324.5450.

GWM, YOUNG 60, 6' 185 lbs. Discreet, mature, fun loving Italian, seeks compatible GBM 50+ friend/ ?? Photo? Ben, Box 249. San Luis Rey, CA. 92068

BIG GOOD LOOKING WHITE BODYBUILDER-MUSICIAN seeks relationship with big Black man who likes being on top. I'm 6 ft. 200 lbs., hairy, nice smooth bubble butt. You be muscular/ chunky/ thick/ masculine. Please call 408.450.241 —leave message. I live in California, but work out of New Orleans til Feb.

COMMITMENT AND VALUES: B/M, 48, 5'11", 170, G/P seeks an affectionate tall G/A white or Black top man 40-55 who likes 1-to-1, home-life, mountains and stability. Mel, Box 712427, L.A. 90071, 213.243.9882.

WM, 48, DISTINGUISHED LOOKING, versatile professional, seeking honest, sincere, super hung, versatile, short (5'3" and under) BM for fun and possible relationship. Write to Allen, 7985 Santa Monica Blvd. Suite 109 #332, West Hollywood, CA. 90046.

FANTASTIC IMPORT Very attractive European, smart, 34, 5' 10", muscular, 180 lbs., discreet, seeks tall, intelligent, very muscular, massive Black bodybuilder, over 220 lbs., for friend. call 213.656.2942.

DC

BLACK BI MALE, 6'3 1/2", 215 lbs., attractive, masculine, seeks Black young servicemen (ex-Marines, Army, Navy guys) and young men 25-35 for friendship; no fats, no fems. Box 4591, Washington, D.C. 20017

BLACK WRESTLER LOOKING for other masculine guys into hot and sweaty wrestling action in swim trunks, jocks, etc. Long, man to man, erotic wrestling action and oil wrestling. Box 91428, Washington, D.C. 20090-1428 or call 202.291.0907.

ATHLETIC WORKAHOLIC 29, 5 ft. 10", 180 lbs., looking for reason to leave the office early. Need articulate ghomeboy who is prof. & physically fit. 27-38. Leave message for Dan 202.543.5887.

POUND OF FLESH AUCTION! Finest guys alive needed for free restaurant bruncheon. Looking for superb examples of best men each age: 20's, 30's, 40's, 50's. Please be fine! Ric: 202.543.5887.

A MAN'S MAN/BGM SPORTSMAN: 6 ft., 220 lbs., professional with ball player's body. Masculine man who also reads and cuddles. ISO 6 ft. BGM who is a weekend roughneck but a weekday corporate jock. Let's make a spiritual journey. Leave message for "BB" (Body and Brains) 202.543.5887.

MARYLAND

IT COULD BE YOU! Would like to meet the right person for the right thing. Johnny 7, Box 56, Temple Hills, MD 20757.

MICHIGAN

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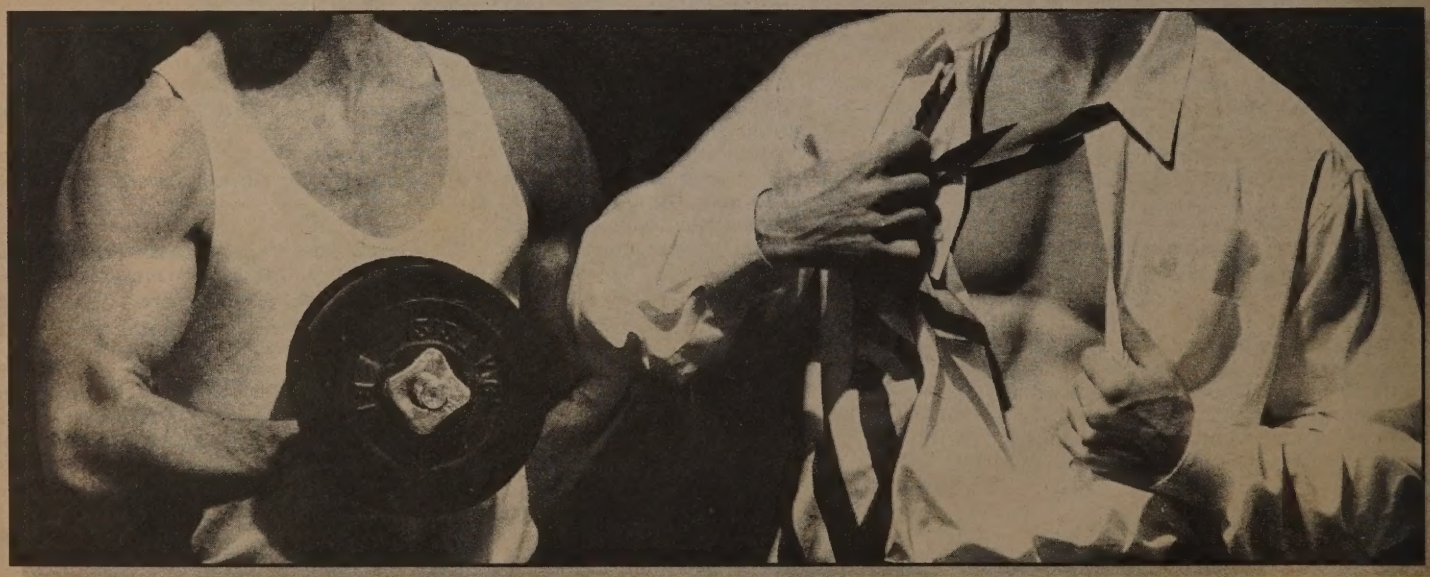

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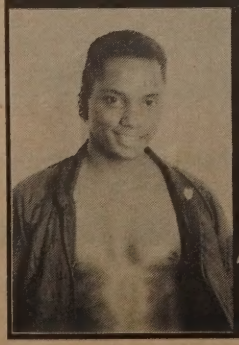

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A Monthly For The Afrocentric Homosexual Man

VOLUME TWO / ISSUE FOUR
SEPTEMBER 1993

STANLEY BENNETT CLAY
Publisher and Editor-In-Chief

Andrew C. Irving
Art Director

Gregory Eugene Travis
Review Editor

Gregory Victorianne
Music Editor

Kevin C. Spears
Political Editor

Mark F. Johnson
Washington D.C. Correspondent

Additional Designs and Layout:
Rob Garrott
Jeffrey Davis

Editorial contributors
Stanley Bennett Clay
Leland Gale
Jan'I
Mark F. Johnson
Kheven La Grone
Blaine Teamer
Gregory Eugene Travis
Gregory Victorianne

Cover & Centerfold Man of Choice
Terrance Jones
of Atlanta, Georgia

Cover & Centerfold Photography & Styling
Chip Williford

Additional Photography
Troy Boyd
Tri Tran
Tim White
Chip Williford

Advertising sales:
[213] 732-4242
FAX: [213]733-5661

Calvin Christopher Williams
Director of Advertising and Marketing

Marketing Associates:
Gregory Casey
Johnnie R. Jackson
Peter McDaniel
Derrick Wright

Administrative Assistant:
Anthony Michael

SBC is published bimonthly by
Stanley Bennett Clay Productions 1205 4th Avenue L.A. CA 90019
[213] 732-4242 Fax: (213)733-5661

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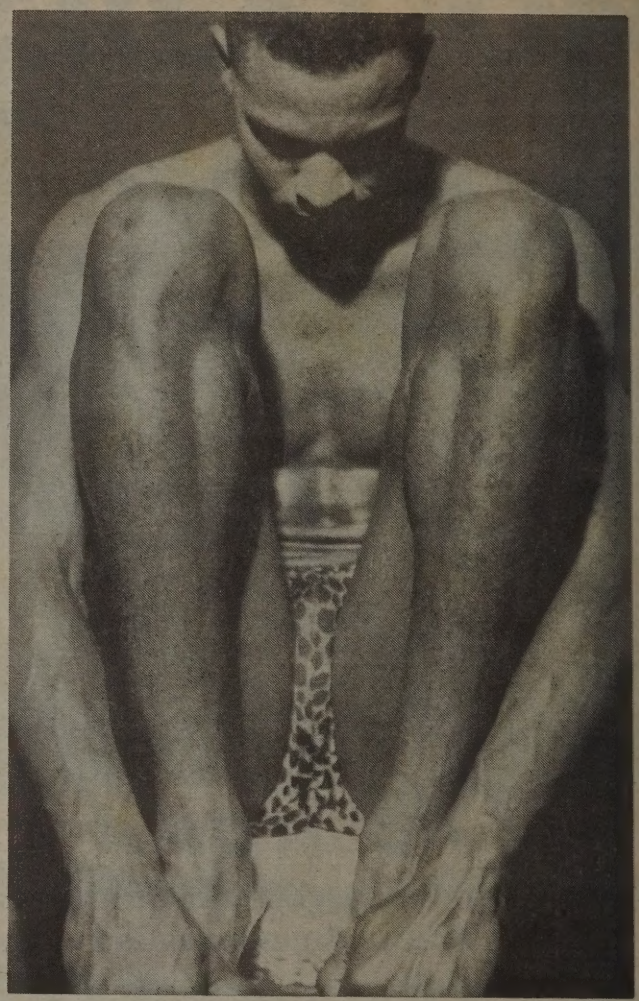

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IN CONCEPT

The Cineplex Odeon Theater chain's recent ban of John Singleton's film essay on black-on-black love, "Poetic Justice", from it's lily-white Universal City Studio Walk says it all about what they think of you. And if you're still taking your hard-earned dollars and spending them at a Cineplex Odeon Theater, then what the Cineplex Odeon Theater chain thinks of you might not be that far off.

A black buck use to toil in the fields for the prosperity of white trash. Today, a black buck can distinguish the true blue from the white lie. But the Cineplex Odeon Theater chain thinks you're too stupid to know that.

The Cineplex Odeon Theater chain exist by the grace of consumers like you, Black consumers who spend so much more than their white counterparts. But the Cineplex Odeon Theater chain thinks you're too stupid to know that.

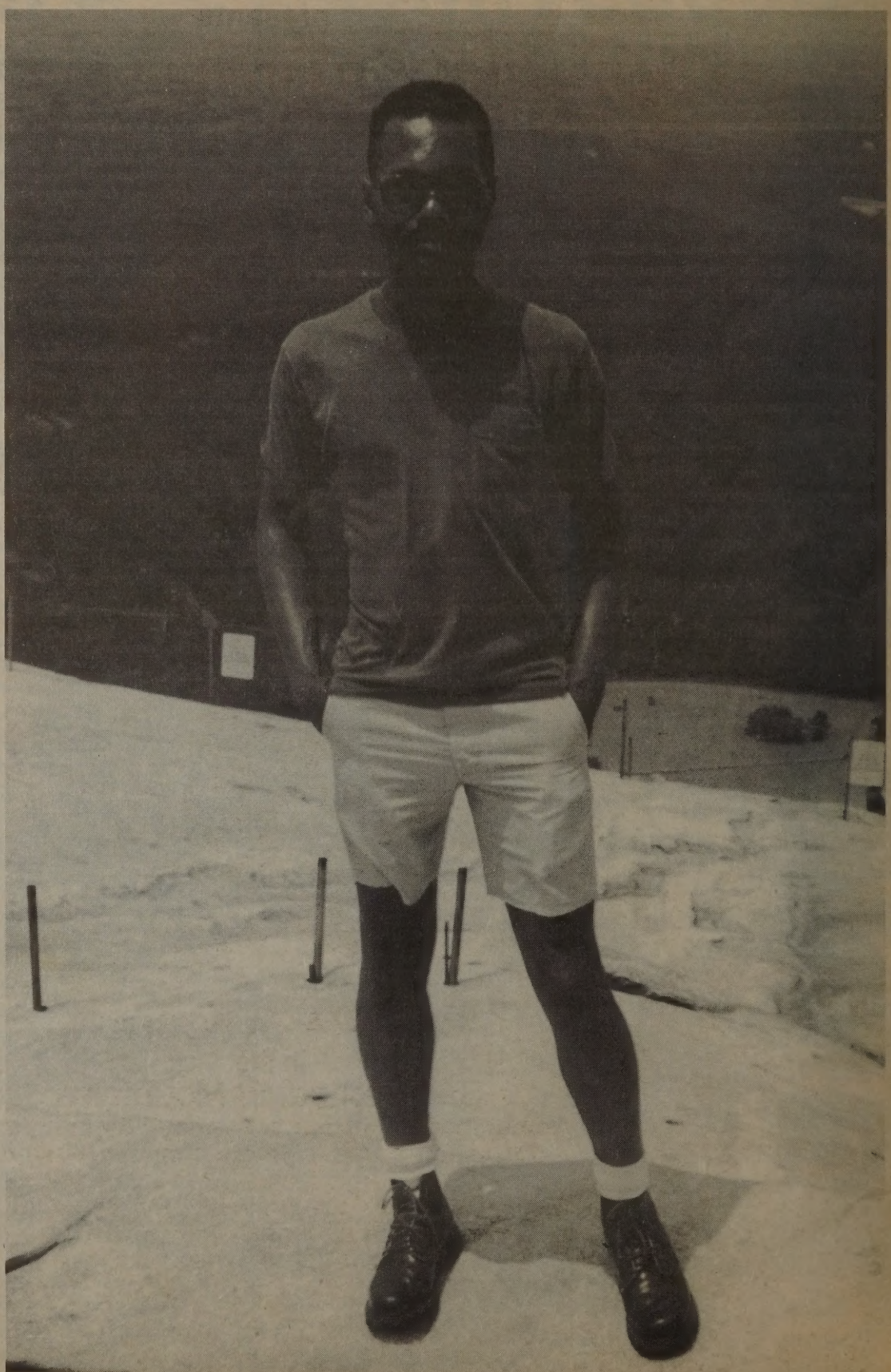
A stupid nigger is a stupid nigger, the Cineplex Odeon Theater chain seems to be saying. Kick 'em, kill 'em, treat 'em like shit. They'll still feed our babies from breast filled with dollars. No matter how we treat 'em, they'll grin and bare it...and pay for the privilege.

The all-knowing Cineplex Odeon Theater chain and it's Universal City Walk needs to stay as lily-white and as pure of thought and as righteous in intent as david dukes. And we——'stupid niggers'——need to help them.

$upport those who $upport you.

Write Me,

Stanley Bennett Clay



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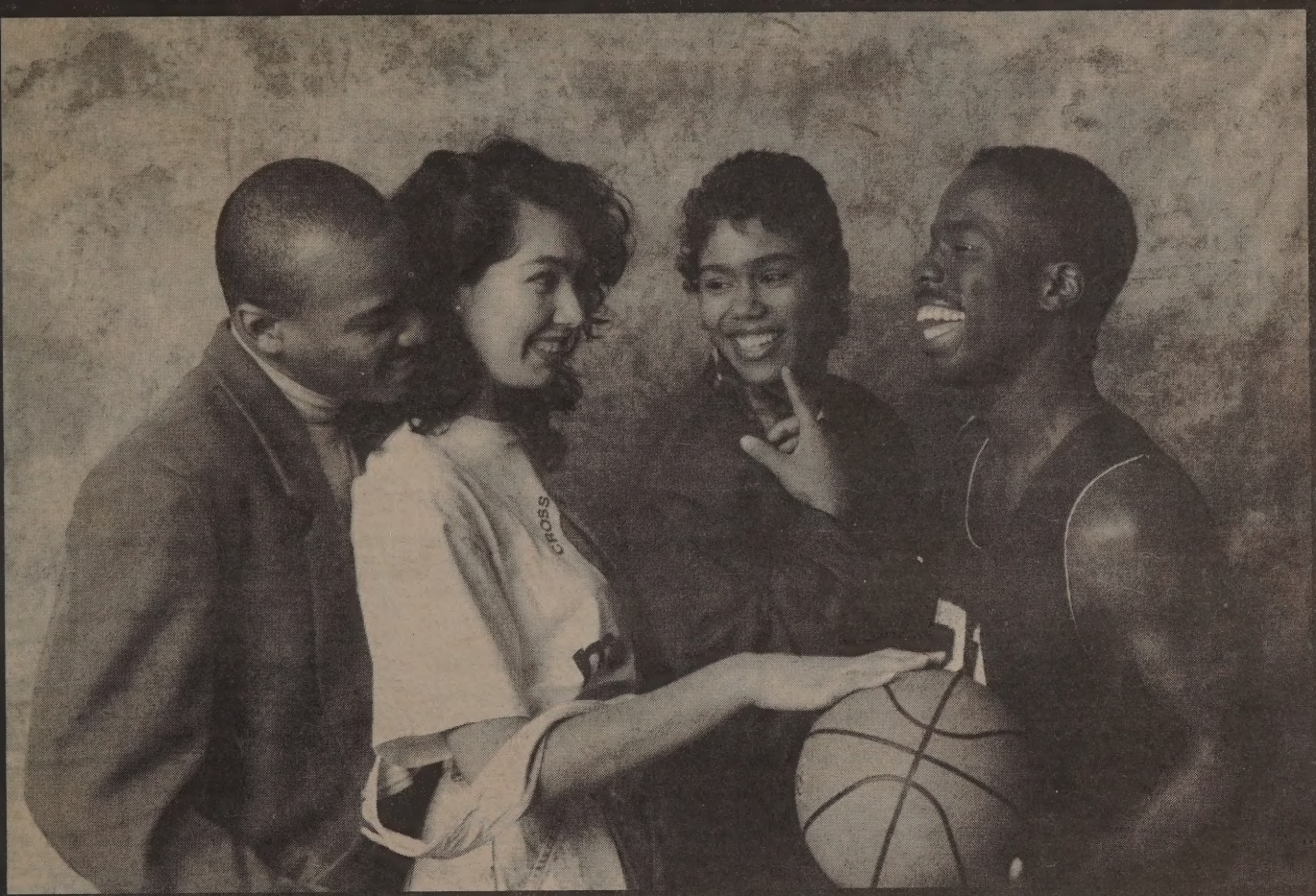

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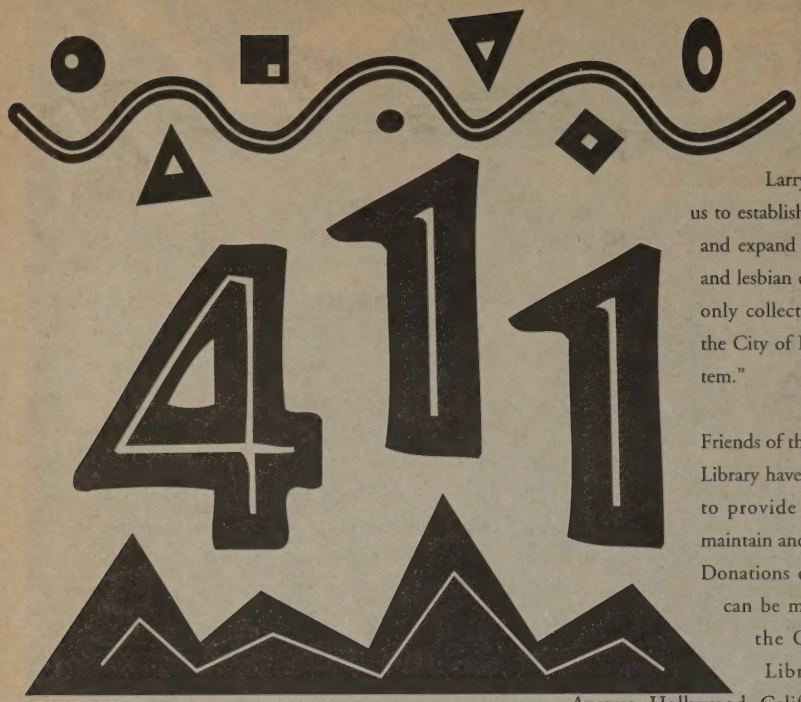


HBO OFFERS SAME-SEX DOMESTIC PARTNERS HEALTH BENEFITS

New York—-As of July 1st, cable programming giant Home Box Office began offering health benefits to same-sex domestic partners. The decision came after a year-long study and follows entertainment companies MCA/Universal and Viacom International, which previously adopted such policies. "The more we learned about the issue, the more the inequity of denying this coverage became apparent," said Michael Fuchs, chairman and chief executive officer of HBO.

NEW GAY BOOK COLLECTION

Hollywood—A permanent browsing collection of gay and lesbian material has been established at the Goldwyn Hollywood Branch of the Los Angeles (City) Public Library. The collection, which circulates for three week loan periods, consists largely of popular gay fiction donated by Larry McIndoo.

Hollywood Branch Librarian John Holleman stated, "We are grateful to Larry McIndoo for helping us to establish this unique collection and expand our services to the gay and lesbian community. This is the only collection of its type within the City of Los Angeles library system."

Friends of the Goldwyn Hollywood Library have established an account to provide financial support to maintain and expand the collection. Donations of materials or money can be made to the Friends of the Goldwyn Hollywood Library at 1623 N. Ivar Avenue, Hollywood, California 90028. Donors should specify that their contribution is for the gay and lesbian collection.

The Goldwyn Hollywood Library at 1623 N. Ivar Avenue is open to the public on Mondays and Wednesdays from 12 PM to 8 PM, and on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 10 AM to 5:30 PM.

For further information, contact John Holleman at 213.467.1821.

VICTIMS OF PHONY AIDS TREATMENTS TESTIFY BEFORE HOUSE

Washington—Hoping to save his life, James Looney, afflicted with the HIV virus, followed a doctor's advice in 1989 and received a series of painful injections of a thick, syrupy drug called Viroxan.

As lumps of dead tissue accumulated in his buttocks, where the shots had been administered, a second doctor urged Looney to have a tube surgically implanted so that the substance could be fed directly into his bloodstream.

The Viroxan, a citrus extract treated with ozone gas, did nothing to improve Looney's condition. But the $20,000 treatment he took over nine months led to blood-clotting. Looney, 41, of North Hollywood, California, contends that he was a victim of what authorities say is one of the fastest growing—-and most poignant—-kinds of health-care fraud: the sale of phony AIDS treatments.

Looney says he was among some 100 people with the AIDS virus or the full-blown disease who turned for help to a retired California physician who administered Viroxan injections from his backyard pool house.

After the treatments failed and allegedly speeded the deaths of four AIDS victims, Looney and eight other patients filed a negligence lawsuit against that doctor, the surgeon who implanted many of the Viroxan tubes, a pharmacist and a hospital.

"I don't think I would've given the time of day for a cure that appeared on the outside to be snake oil, but these appeared to be caring, responsible physicians," said Looney, a former salesman in the California aerospace industry, told a House subcommittee recently.

Across the nation, authorities say a small but growing number of doctors and businesses are offering little-tested, often home-grown medicines that supposedly can reverse the AIDS process or ease it's symptoms.

"When you're dealing with people who are desperate and vulnerable—-and whose families will do anything—-there are always those who will subject them to unscrupulous, if not criminal, behavior, and we have to deal with it, said David Kessler, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration.

While regulators are determined to shut down the fraudulent vendors, Kessler said they also are trying to leave AIDS patients room to experiment with promising drugs from overseas that haven't been fully tested by his agency.

There is still no known cure for AIDS. But under pressure from the AIDS community, the FDA this past May issued guidelines to help distinguish legitimate "buyers' clubs," offering risky treatments, from the obvious phony wares.

The clubs sprang up in the late 1980s as people with AIDS searched for a way to distribute unlicensed drugs from other countries.

According to the new guidelines, legitimate clubs should operate under a licensed physician, refuse to commercialize the imported drugs and refrain from buying drugs if unknown contents or origin.

If the clubs or individuals don't follow these guidelines, they run the risk of being victims of fraud, according to FDA officials.

The officials said substances marketed under the names Cancell, Immune + Plus and Vital Health Products are among those thought to be worthless or fraudulent. Therapies involving the use of ozone actually can be injurious, they said.

Randy Payne, who has AIDS, told the House panel he tried ozone therapy last year after an advertisement placed by a New York businessman suggested he could go from "HIV+ to HIV-" in 30 days.

After 16 days of having ozone gas and other substances pumped into his body at a Mexican clinic, Payne said he was suffering from stomach cramps and golf ball-sized lumps in his arms, and he quit the therapy.

LAW LEANS TOWARD SAME-SEX MARRIAGES

Hawaii—On May 5th, the Hawaii Supreme Court became the first in the United States to rule that states may not be able to prohibit gays and lesbians from marrying. The court said that any state regulation that sets up limits based on gender (that men may only marry women and vice versa) can be defended only if the state can show "compelling" reasons. That is the toughest legal test for a state to meet, and traditionally it has required proof that public safety is at stake. The ruling reinstates the lawsuit in the trial court of three Honolulu-area same sex couples who were denied marriage licenses.

WORLD'S LARGEST WRITERS GROUP FORMS LESBIAN AND GAY COMMITTEE

New York—On June 3rd, PEN American Center, the largest of the one hundred and seventeen centers worldwide that comprise International PEN (poets, playwrights, essayist, editors, and novelist), announced the formation of the PEN Lesbian & Gay Committee. The Committee was formed to combat the censorship of gay and lesbian writing, as well as to insure access to such writing.

School boards throughout the country routinely delete all representation of lesbians and gays from their curricula. School libraries frequently ban gay books, while printers throughout the country sometimes refuse to produce new works by lesbians and gays because they consider them morally offensive. The PEN Committee will expose and oppose all such threats to the First Amendment.

The first task of the Committee is to challenge the way textbooks are putting gay and lesbian writers back into the closet, thereby stripping them of an essential part of their cultural identification. In Texas, current textbooks on American literature include biographical sketches of Walt Whitman, Countee Cullen, Langston Hughes, Truman Capote and Adrienne Rich. In each case, the author's race and gender are noted, yet no mention is made of sexual orientation. Rich, for instance, is described as "a leader in a newly defined female literature," and her poems are characterized as "bold and intense statements bout personal experiences and political and social issues." Rich, who is a Committee member, protests the omission of this information: "I write from my conscience as a lesbian as much as from my conscience of being a woman. My lesbian identity is an informing part of my poetry."

The closeting of gay and lesbian writers has a broad consequence for gay and lesbian youth. When these writers are denied their cultural identification, the young readers are robbed of examples. The report of HHS Secretary Louis Sullivan's Task Force on Youth Suicide, which states that "gay and lesbian youth are two or three times more likely to attempt suicide than other young people," stresses the critical need to provide them with appropriate role models.

Some of the Committee members, such as William Burroughs, Allen Ginsberg, Essex Hemphill and Gore Vidal have already been included in textbooks, and all are determined to fight the homophobia that distances them from the needs of lesbian and gay students. The writers on the Committee are also eager to work directly with these young people thorough readings and group discussions.

Stephen Kory Friedman will coordinated the activities of the Committee from the PEN American Center office located at 568 Broadway, New York City, New York 10012.

For further information contact Mr. Friedman at 212.334.1660

MARLON RIGGS FEATURED IN DAVID GEFFEN PWA DOCUMENTARY

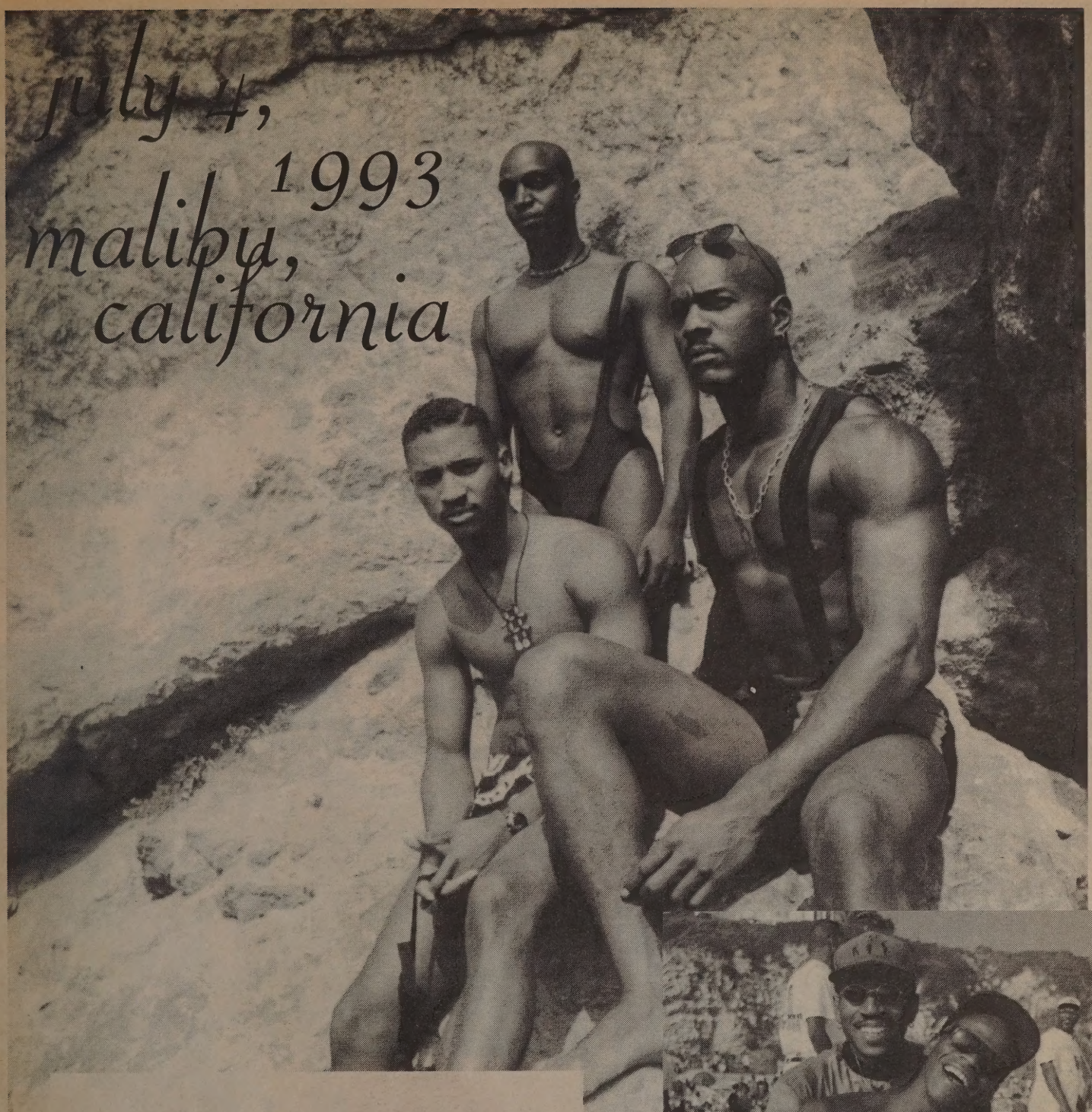
Hollywood—Gay Billionaire film producer and philanthropist, David Geffen, will team with producer Steve Tisch to executive produce and put up start-up money to launch the AIDS-themed feature-length documentary version of Andreas R. Vaucher's book Muses From Chaos and Ash (Grove Press). The acclaimed collection of interviews reveals the feelings, reflections of AIDS-afflicted artists, some of whom have died since the book's publication and will feature six key artists from dance, music, theater, literature, film and the visual arts who are living with AIDS, and it will chronicle their heroic and inspiring passage through anger, activism, spirituality and freedom.

Marlon Riggs, known for his controversial and critically acclaimed documentary Tongues Untied, is one of the artists living with AIDS that will be featured in the project slated for theatrical release.

"Even though I was acutely aware of being potentially face-to-face with death, I didn't feel like I was dying. I felt that finally I knew what it was to live, to really call forth all that is in you and demand the highest of yourself, the noblest and the truest, and to offer that as a gift to yourself as well as to others," stated Riggs.

at the beach

a photo essay by chip williford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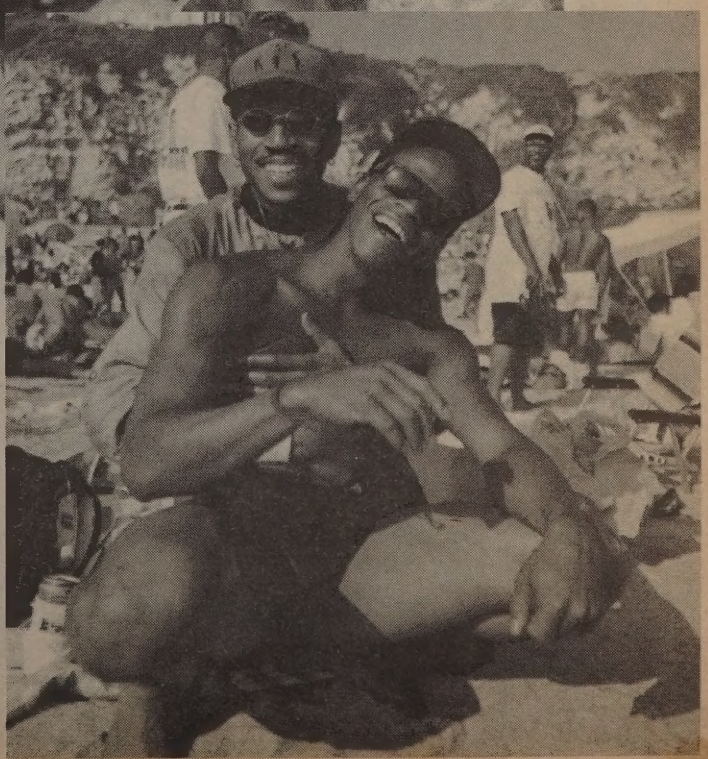

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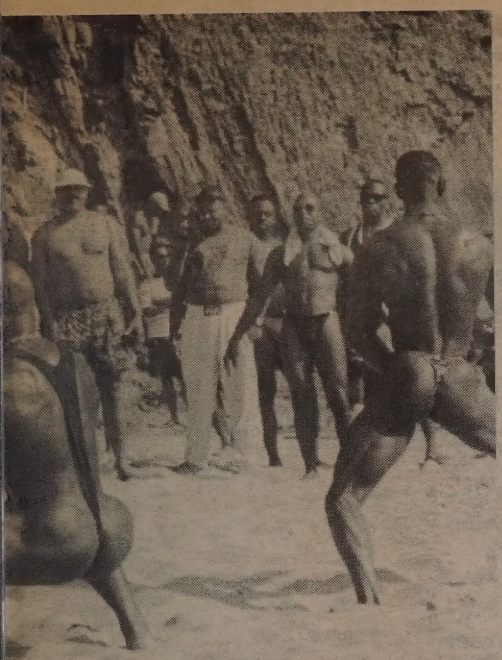
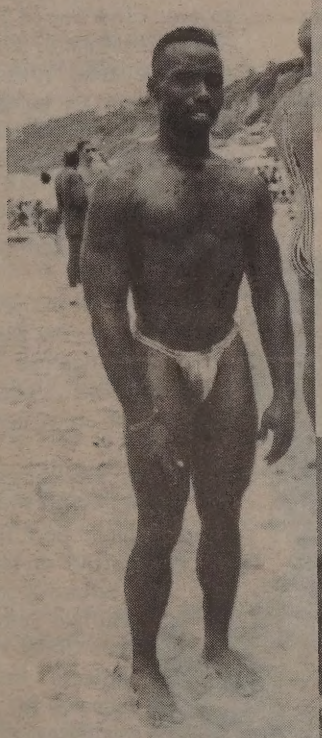
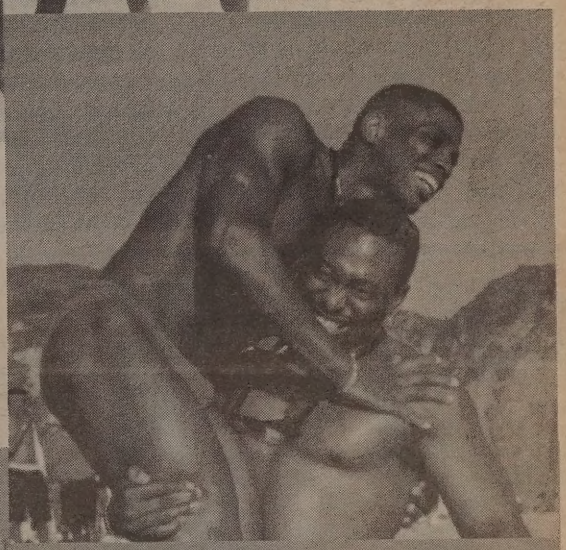
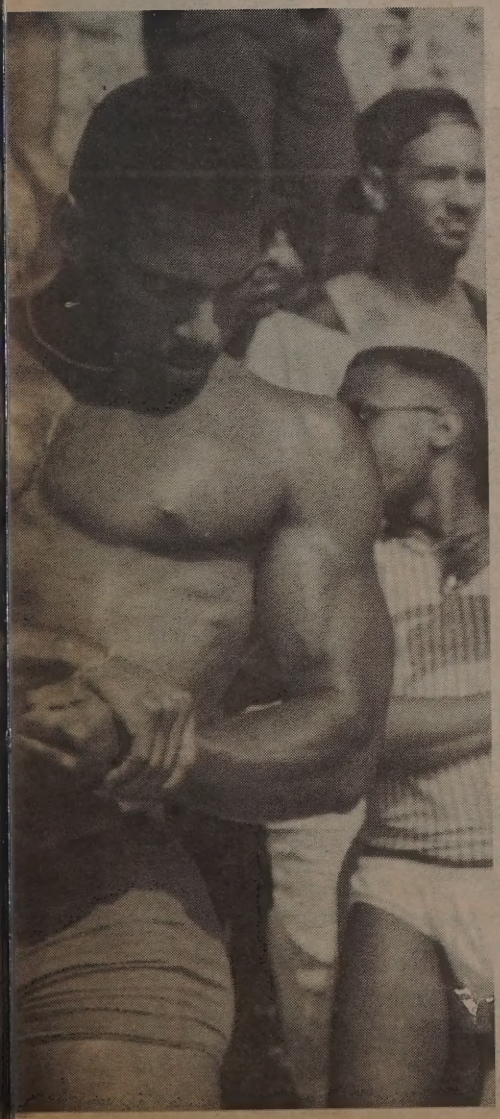








GREGORY VICTORIANNE'S

«afrocen» traxx

giving you the 411 on who dropped-kicked who

It may not be her best photo but...<<I'm breaking new ground. I'm gettin' into another genre of music that I don't want to discuss at this time, not until I've made headway with it.>> says hit-hungry Queen of Soul over the blower. <<It's merging of styles. I can't wait to work it out. You'll hear some of it on my new album.>>

Speakin' of her upcomin' collection of classics from 1980 to present along with 4 new traxx on money makin' Arista, the 51 year-old legend has been sliced between **CLIVILLES & COLE** and **L.A.REID** & **BABYFACE** with a possible cut with metaphysical duo **PM DAWN**. **ARETHA** also plans to set the record straight & get it right in an autobiography she hopes to have out later this year.

Speakin' of the cosmic duo, their latest melodious & testosterone groover <The Way Of The Wind> [Gee Street/Island] has drawn some unabashed proselytizing from funk 'n' roll gangstas **PROPER GROUND** <<**PM DAWN** says you should forget the past>> growls ringleader **SANDMAN**. <<They're like fruity Nazis, wantin' to revise history...>>

butchtude diva

Unimpressed with the words, **PM DAWN** continues to rack up sales with <<<The Bliss Album.... Vibrations Of Love And Anger And The Ponderence Of Life And Existence>>> CD while The **MATERIAL GIRL**'s puppets have come into a world where today's stars are yesterday's news before sundown.

The pair was later cat-clawed by butchtude diva **NENEH CHERRY** durin' the ALL-STAR PEDIATRIC AIDS FOUNDATION BENEFIT concert for nicin' up 2 the Afro-Swede alleycat. She later dropped some funky stylin' on her repertoire of songs that were half rap & half warbles & sometimes grating includin' the hits <Buffalo Stance>, <Kisses In The Wind> & <I Ain'T Gone Under Yet>. The provocative <Sassy> and the hardcore <Buddy X...> drew strong response. She later delivered the hauntin' <Move With Me> from the psychosexual thriller <<<SLIVER>>> soundtraxx which was well received.

The sampler, courtesy of the safe sex label, features their rosta's finest artists includin' Brit's rebel gangstas **MASSIVE ATTACK**'s delicately tender <Unfinished Business>, multi-racial duo **AFTERSHOCK**'s luscious <Slave To The Vibe> & **ENIGMA**'s dreamy <Carly's Song>.

Check out Kingston, JA's latest heartthrob **SHAGGY** with his gruff vocals on the ruff & ready <Oh, Carolina>, a #1 UK Pop hit with roosty backin' grooves. His upcomin' <<<Pure Pleasure>>> is droppin' in a few. There's also Brit's Pop/Reggae band **UB40**'s lovely version <Can't Help Falling In Love> in tribute to **ELVIS**.

UB40 is kickin' off a 30-day 23-city tour 2 plug their upcomin' <<<Promise & Lies>>> platter & hittin' the road [R] Trenchtown's 1st family **ZIGGY MARLEY & THE MELODY MAKERS** 2 plug their socially

conscious & funky groover <<<JOY & BLUES>>>. Lead-off single & video <Brothers & Sisters>, which was shot & recorded in Kingston & features upliftin' lyrics with melodic elegance, has hit the airwaves & boobtudes.

Fresh from a European tour, the siblings will headline & share the stage with **MIDNIGHT OIL** & **HOTHOUSE FLOWERS**. You'll hear new songs & oldies <Look Who's Dancing> & <All Love> & <Tomorrow People> & <Tumblin' Down> & a tribute 2 their father. Check local papers or dial the Virgin offices in 90210 & 10019.

carl mcintosh of loose ends

Circulatin' on US bootlegged cassette & UK white label vinyl [R] UK's premier acts **LOOSE ENDS** & **SOUL II SOUL**. After hearin' a few traxxs on the answerphone & a few calls later, a package was sent overnite 2 meet my deadline 4 Afrocentraxx. The folks at Virgin know how 2 get busy. Anyway, if you're a worshipper of both bands, U won't be disappointed. Trust me.

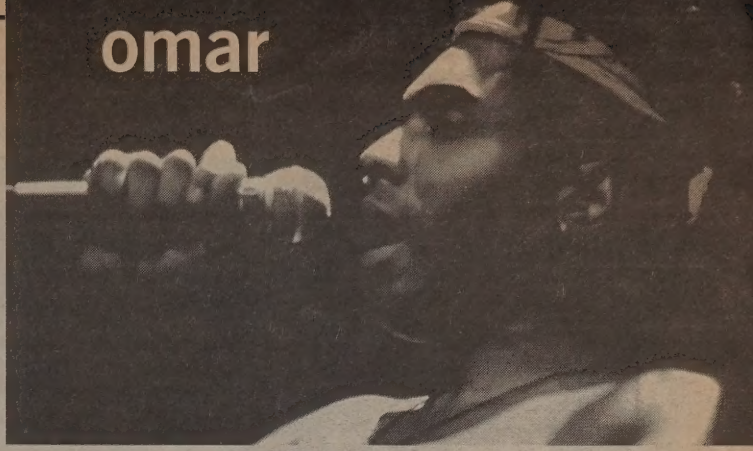
Durin' their silence both **CARL 'MACCA' McINTOSH** & **JAZZIE B.** have been keepin' busy on outside projects & runnin' their empires. **MACCA** is producin' feline vocalist **FUMI** & new acts [N] the UK. **LOOSE ENDS** new project features ex-**BOBBY MCFERRIN** sirens **LARN'E** & **MICHELE** with moonlightin' slots from **ROY AYERS & GWEN GUTHRIE & SLY DUNBAR**. Expect a bit of archive samples & some <<<Old, very jazz, **LEROY HUTON, MARVIN GAYE** style....>>> says the man who's <Watching You> study me.

In the meantime, seek in haste their hard 2 find & easy 2 appreciate <<<Tighten Up. Vol 1>>> (UK Ten/Virgin) collection of reconstructed classics includin' <A Little Spice> & <Hangin' On A String> & <Gonna Make You Mind> & <Slow Down> & 8 mo' classics with the **YOUNG DISCIPLES** co-produced red light bump-&-grinder <Don't Worry> guaranteed 2 make U rise 4 the occasion.

With his fashion line kickin' off again, due 2 the recession that crippled most of Black Britain's small businesses, **JAZZIE B.** has weathered the storm & has orchestrated a new **FUNKI DREAD** movement. Keepin' busy, he controlled the knobs on **JAMES BROWN**'s latest <<<Universal James>>> & revitalized 70's & 80's kick-back girlie group **THE JONES GIRLS'** number 1 UK album <<<Comin' Back>>> via UK ARP label. He later had rhymes & reasons on **CARON WHEELER**'s rootsy <Wonder> traxx & remixed his live-in labelmate—the debonair **EFUA**'s <Down Is The Drop>. You'll hear philosophical rhymes over bass heavy rhythms with stronger Caribbean & African influences & London's latest 'street soul' vibe groove.

Check out the inspirational quartet **NU COLOURS**' latest <Fallin' Down> US 12" courtesy of Polygram. Produced by up & comin' man of the moment & gospel turned soul crooner **BRYAN POWELL** with remixes by **JERMAINE** [**TLC** fame] **DUPIN**. The cut has sumptuous blends of vocal harmonies & hot rhythms that will have a tantalizin effect on your ears & feet alike. Taken from their

bryan powell

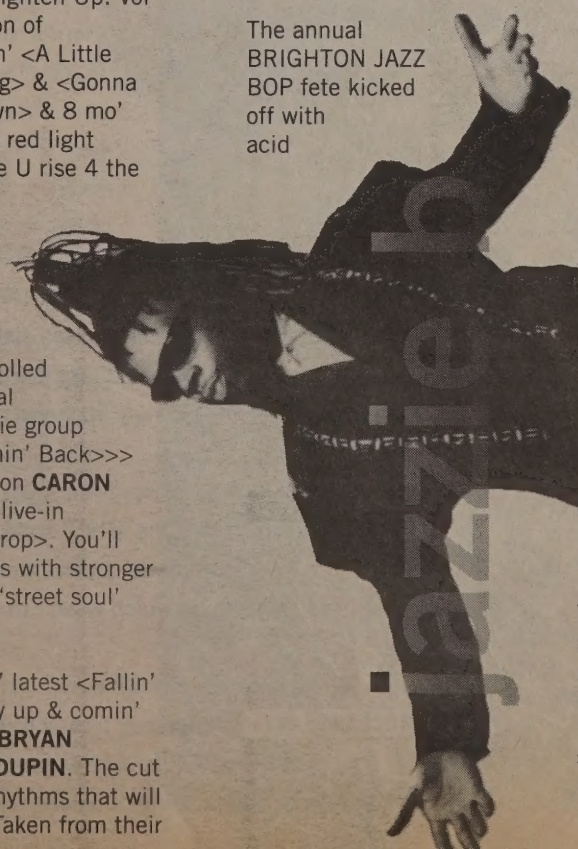


omar

jus' released <<UNLIMITED>> platter, watch 4 mo' **NU COLOURS** in SBC, the bi-monthly turned monthly.

Be on the lookout 4 A&M's version of **LOOSE ENDS** servin' mega attitude - **VERTICAL HOLD**, featurin' [**BRUNO & STONE & BRIGHT**] with their lead-off single <Seems You're Much Too Busy> sportin' 9 mixxes for guaranteed radio & club rotation includin' 'All Of That Mix' & 'Dirt Theory Mix' & 'Groove Theory Mix' & 'House Appeal Mix' which [R] so damn infectious, the rhythmic & seamless grooves with **STONE**'s torch vocals. A band 2 watch 4.

The annual BRIGHTON JAZZ BOP fete kicked off with acid jazz hipsters **JTQ** featurin' **NOEL MCKOY** premierin' traxxs from their jus' shipped <<<Supernatural Feelin'>>> [UK Big Life] with widescreem brass & swaggin' wah wah motifs on' <We Need Each Other> <Hope & Pray> & the revamped 89' cult hit <Love The Life> kept the pilgrims groovin'. Flavour of the month duo, **DODGE CITY PRODUCTION** was celebratin' <<Steppin' UP & OUT>> [UK 4th & Broadway/Island] soulful fusion of hip rap & bop soul cuts <The Road In Front Of Me> <Ain't Going For That> & <People Come On> were the familiar as **IC CULTURE** thanked every 1 over & over again 4 supportin' **DODGE CITY**.



Closin' the marathon gatherin' was up & comin' Mancunian vibesman **MAX 'High Vibes' BEASLEY** with special guest star, nubian poster pin-up brothuh **OMAR**, who casually came out & rendered his new gems <Little Boy> & <You Can Fly> while his anthems <I Don't Mind Waiting> & <Don't Mean A Thing> were 4 the lovers.

To capitalize on the event & showcase new & familiar artist, **OMAR**'s ex-label, Talkin' Loud, rush-released a 15 traxx double pack sampler of the label's finest rosta. **OMAR**'s number 1 hits

«

<There's Nothing Like This> & <You Got The Move> are sliced with street bohemians **GALLIANO** with <Hungry Like A Baby> & <Prince Of Peace> with nite groovers trio **PERCEPTION**'s concoction of sassy soulful lyrics & latin house vibes <Serious Love> - a Top 5 club hit.

galliano

On the B-side, tagged with **GANGSTARR** influences & badder than **ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT** with reggae toastin' with progressive urban & urbane rhymes & funky hip jazz beats **URBAN SPECIES**'s <Hide & Seek>. Hopin' 2 do what they failed 2 do with OMAR, the label's latest stallion **BRYAN POWELL** drops a jazz swing-ish <I Commit>. Afro-Parisian rapper **MC SOLAAR**'s <Qui Seme Le Vent Recolt Le Tempo> [He Who Sows The Wind Shall Reap The Tempo], kept my finger on replay with his deep & husky vocals over a snazzy downtempo bone grindin' **GANGSTARR** remixx.

«afrocen» traxx

If U missed Vol 1., closin' [R] **YOUNG DISCIPLES** episodic mournful tappin' <All I Have In Me> & their anthem <Apparently Nothing> with **CARLENE**'s pristine, emotive vocals highlighting each cut. There's fuzakteers **INCOGNITO**'s club classics <Always There> featurin' long standin' club siren **JOCELYN BROWN** & <Colibri> with spicy scats by **MAYSA LEAK** makin' this a must-have 4U collectors of hard 2 find easy 2 appreciate British sounds.

Hopin' 2 gain street level status, the **ICE PRINCESS** of cocktail jazz returns 2 our side of the pond 2 plug her socio-hypno-groover <Feel No Pain> in Nellie Hooper mixes with support by the **TALKING HEADS** of rap, **DIGABLE PLANETS**.

Speakin' over the transatlantic blower about the cover $22.00 <<Love Deluxe>> program <<<Albert Watson, the photographer for the cover & album came 2 Italy and said he had 2 hear the project before he could take any photos>>> whispers **SADE**. <<<I was immediately impressed with that>>>.

<<<He said he thought the songs were quite bare & raw & sensual and this must be in the pictures. He had the idea 2 spray me with gold paint which brought out my skin tone>>> she says. <<<It looked as if I was clothed and my skin wasn't completely naked. The object was 2 make something which wasn't titillating but had some rawness & emotion 2 it>>>.

Wrappin' up a worldwide tour, her languid after the orgasm voice simmered <<<I've been all around the world, only to find your love is King>>> as I blushed & asked how she liked the **ROY HAYDEN**'s **OPAZ** Production remixxes on the UK CD/12" <Kiss Of Life> & the b-side steamy <Room 55> that sends shivers down my partner & my spines when we're in heavy rotation <<<My eyes are too big 4 my face>>>> click.

The insect flower trio **DIGABLE PLANETS** jus' completed an extensive US tour with street soulsters **D-INFLUENCE** & liteweight rappers **GROOVE GARDEN**. They later jaywalked the 9th ANNUAL DRUM RHYTHM FESTIVAL in Amsterdam with the **RED HOT CHILI PEPPERS**, **URBAN DANCE SQUAD** & **THE GANSTARR QUARTET** featurin' music maestros **DONALD BRYD, ROY AYERS, ZACHERY BREAUX** with sexy kittens ex -**BRAND NEW HEAVIES** lovely **N'DEA DAVENPORT** & 1-time **YOUNG DISCIPLES' CARLENE ANDERSON** on vocals.

The World Beat devotional groovefest featured Egypt's Godfather of Nubian Roots **ALI HASSAN KUBAN** doin' both traditional & contemporary sounds, Zaire's crooner **PAPA WEMBA** & layin' down some stone 2 the bone Ska Funk & Punk Rock were Afro-Antilles **MALDITA VECINDAD**. Closin' the fete was Brazilian Queen of Song **TANIA MARIA** joyfully singin' <Tanoca Vignette> & <The Lady From Brazil> & the beautiful <Come With Me Now>, a crowd favorite.

Jus' a few miles away at the 18th ANNUAL NORTH SEAS JAZZ FESTIVAL in the Dutch Center of Hague were myrioi of musicians from around the world. U heard Afro Cuban vs. Gypsy Jazz & Salsa Blues with special themes includin' [Trumpets for **DIZZY**] [Heavy Jazz] & [Grooves Of The World]

Afrocentraxx photo credits: Aretha Franklin: courtesy Arista Records / Aftershock:Jeffrey Scales / Neneh Cherry: Jean-Baptiste Mondino / Omar: courtesy Kongo Dance / Carl McIntosh: Andy Earl / Bryan Powell: courtesy Talkin Loud Records / Jazzy B: Chris Carroll / Galliano: courtesy Playground & Rhythm / Gang Starr: Matt Gunther / Urban Species: courtesy Talkin Loud Records / Sade: courtesy of EpicRecords / Tania Maria: Gilles Larrain / Chaka Khan: Steve Paige / Zap Mama: Nick Baratta

Openin' the week-long extravaganza were female a capella act **ZAP MAMA**, a Zairian/Belgium based band who has a mosaic of sounds, races, nationalities & cultures. Their rich sound takes you on a fascinating journey through Zairian work chants, Pygmy spirituals & Syrian love songs which [R] re-situated in a contemporary content using the basic of instruments, the human voice.

<<<We want people to discover the richness of our African & European repertoire>>> smiles leader & arranger **MARIE DUALINE**. <<<The greatest strength of the human musical scope is expression through the body; the breath, the vibration of the vocal chords>>>.

Their show was compellin' & fun with vibrant personality and expressive theatrixx, dance & good humored stage antics that transported the crowd into rapture. The lyrics were in French, English & the West African dialect Bantu with poly global melodies which [R] also on their <<<Adventures In Afroprea 1>>> [Luaka Bop/Warner Bro]. The uptempo doo-wap drivels <Botttle>, <Son Cubano>, <Badanzele> were 4 the pygmies of Central Africa. The beautiful & wondrous <Mupepe> along with <Miziki> & <Brrrkal!> brings 2 mind **SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK** or **THE MANHATTAN TRANSFER** with voices of quality & distinction. A safe selection 4 U consumers with essential listenin' desire.

Soul vixen **CHAKA KHAN** showed why she is the *diva* of songs with a jazz set featurin' tunes of **DIZZY** & other jazz legends were sliced with vintage **RUFUS** traxxs & personal faves. She was later joined by **ETTA JAMES** & **MILLIE JACKSON** along with **JOHNNY 'GUITAR' WATSON** among others in an all-nite Blues jam session.

The battle of the bands saw **THE YELLOWJACKETS** drawin' good response while **STEP AHEADS** & The **ZAWINUL SYNDICATE** gave solid sets. Givin' the strongest set of all was **INCOGNITO** who enjoys playin' live. <<<The band lives for playin' live, that's us in our moment of glory>>> enthused **BLUEY** after performin' 120 straight minutes as the joint jumped with pure joy.

Cuba's massive army of musicians **LOS VAN VANB** kicked out some executin' spicy & slick jams of Afro Cuban rhythms on <Cali> & <Que Palo Ese Ese> as both traxxs can be found on <<Salt & Tabasco>> [Island/Mango] a sampler of sounds from Cuba, The Caribbean & Brazil 4 those 2 far away.

The 13 saucy slices features **ARROW**'s 7:13 Calypso-ish anthem <O' LA Soca> & <Groove Master> with Brazilian crooner **NANA VASCONCELO**'s rhythmic <Bush Dance>. **THIRD WORLD**'s disco-ish <Now That We Found Love> is sliced between **KID CREOLE**'s funky <Musica Americana> & **YOMO TORO**'s festive <A LA VERDE GUE> which will sweep you up instantly in I big party carnival.

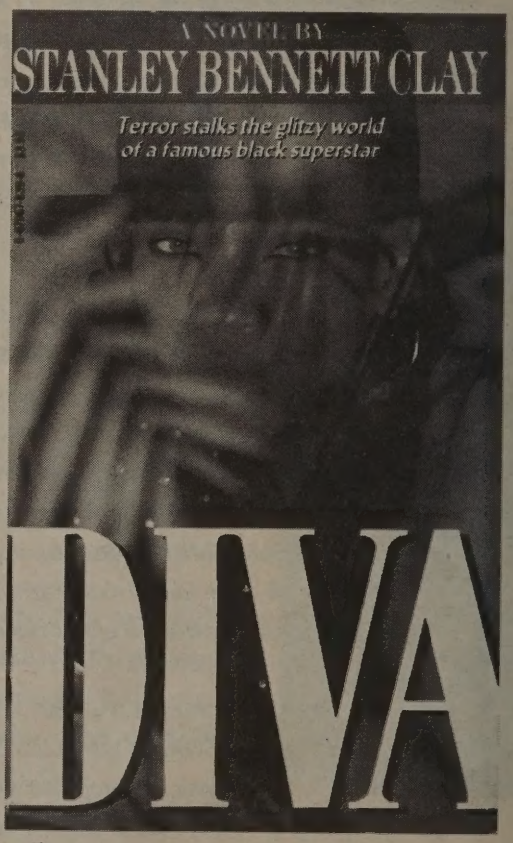
AY CARAMBA!

Reach 4 me, my brothuhs, I'm your pot of gold...

LIGHTS! CAMERA! MURDER!

Beautiful, talented Ida Lake was known as "The Diva" to her millions of fans when she reined as Hollywood's Black singing sensation of the '40s. her career—and her sanity—collapsed after the suspicious deaths of the husband she adored and the daughter she worshipped and, haunted by rumors of "un-American" activities, Ida took refuge abroad. Two decades later, she has been coaxed into a comeback as the star of a Broadway musical. But tragedy stalk Ida Lake once again as a mysterious web of intrigue, sex scandal and murder envelops the show.

In Diva, author Stanley Bennett Clay captures the glamour—and suspense—that is show business.



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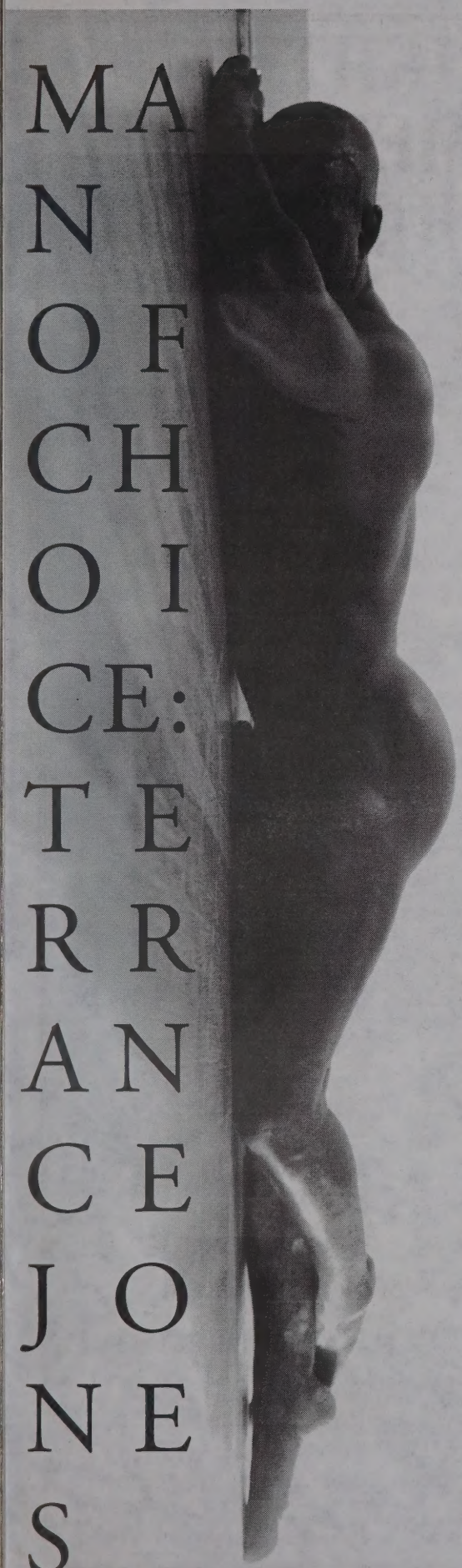
DRAMA WASN'T ONLY ON STAGE!

MAN OF CHOICE: TERRANCE JONES



It has often been said that the Black man is the state flower of Georgia. And beautiful Terrance Jones is proof positive. The first repeat "Man of Choice" in the 2 year history of SBC magazine, this 29 year old Atlanta Adonis devastated the formidable competition at the 4th of July At The Beach Hot Body Contest with a first place sweep. He repeated that victory the following night at the first annual SBC Centerfold Search Contest at the Catch One Disco.

"Being a former SBC centerfold," he stated modestly, "has given me a stronger sense of pride in being a Black gay man, and my role in Black gay society"

Terrance, a manager at the Atlanta-based Lee Haney Fitness Center, was actually born in Tulsa Oklahoma, the fifth of thirteen children.

After receiving a B.S. in Psychology at Oklahoma's University of Langston, he joined the Navy where he spent three and a half years.

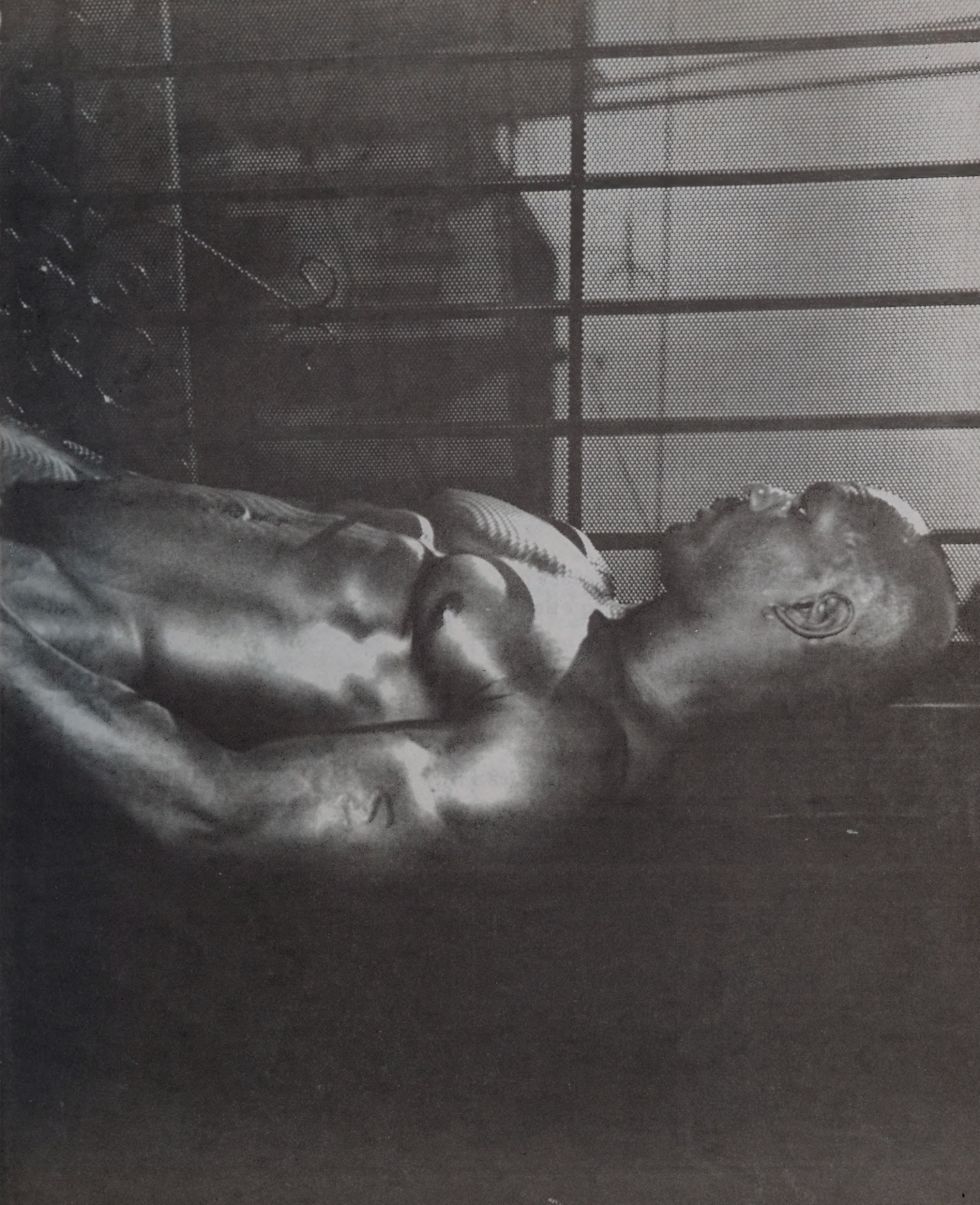
He credits his mother as the greatest influence in his life, a beautiful and determined Black woman who raised thirteen children on her own and still managed to earn a college degree. "I get my strength and moral values from her."

Although this 210 lbs. 6' 3" Man of Black Virgo has lived all over the world, including Spain and Rome, Atlanta is his geographical erogenous zone.

Man-wise, he likes a caring, kind, fun-loving, loving-loving, sexual kind of guy who loves himself for being himself.

Those in denial need not apply.

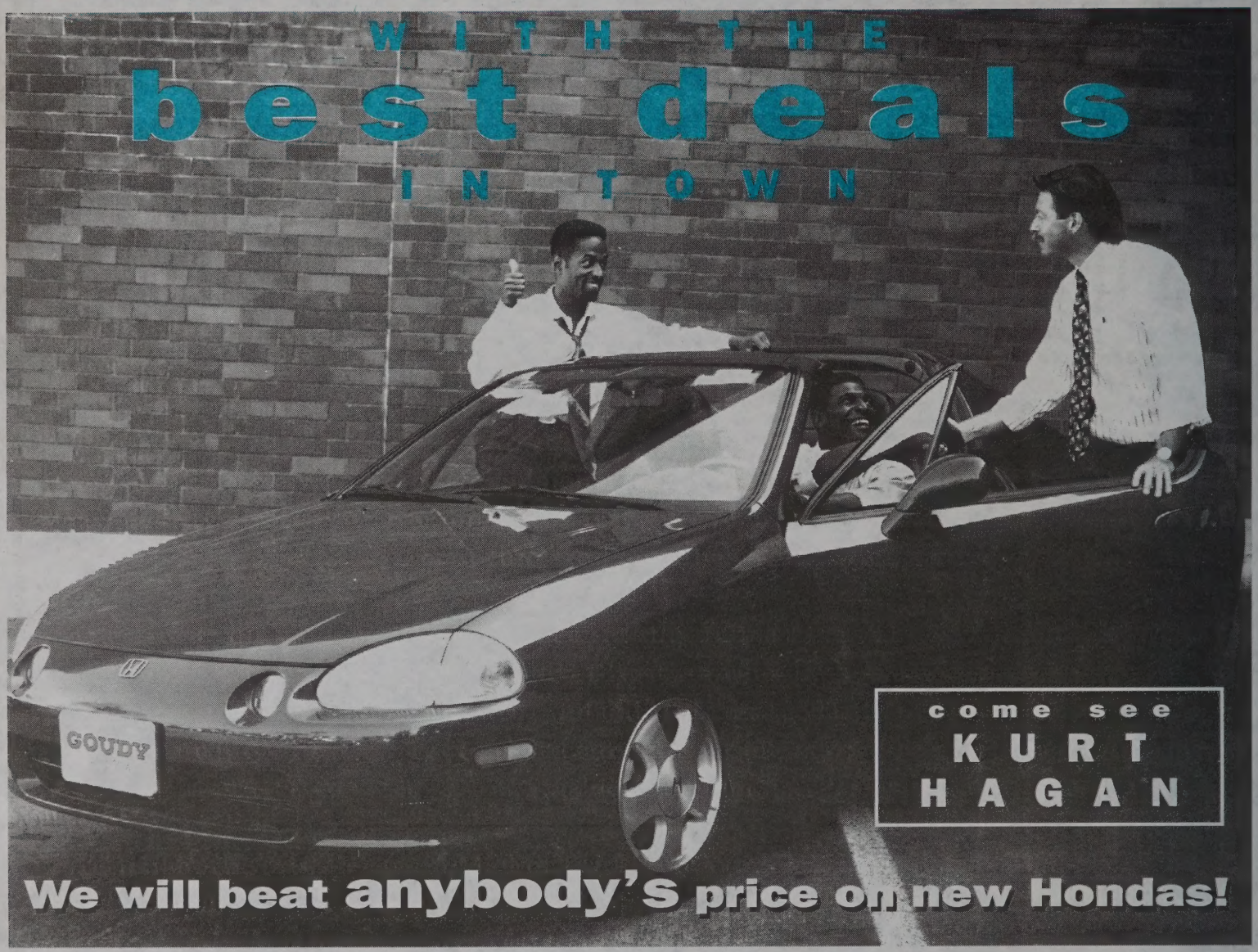
Congratulations, Terrance, on your second coming!



GOUDY HONDA

reaching out to the

BLACK GAY COMMUNITY



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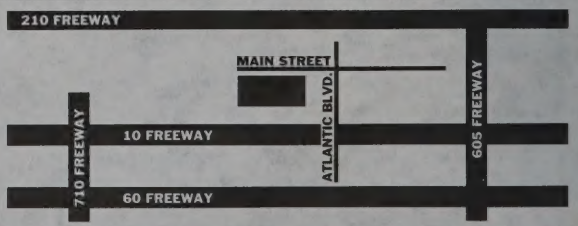

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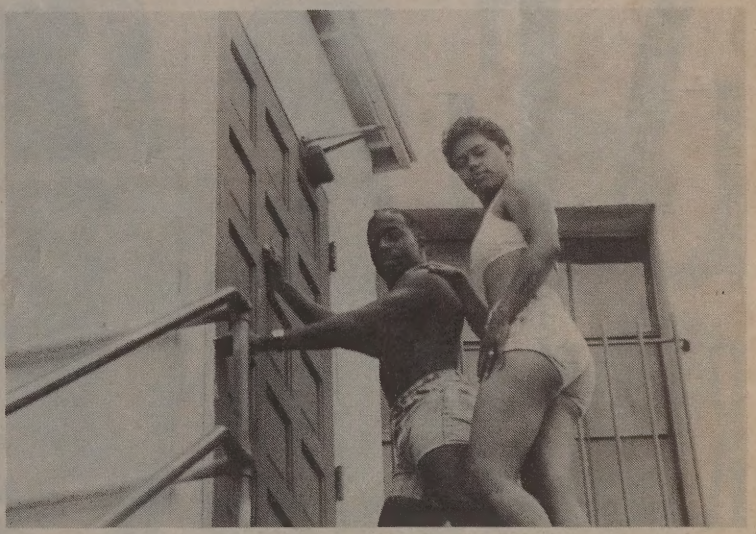

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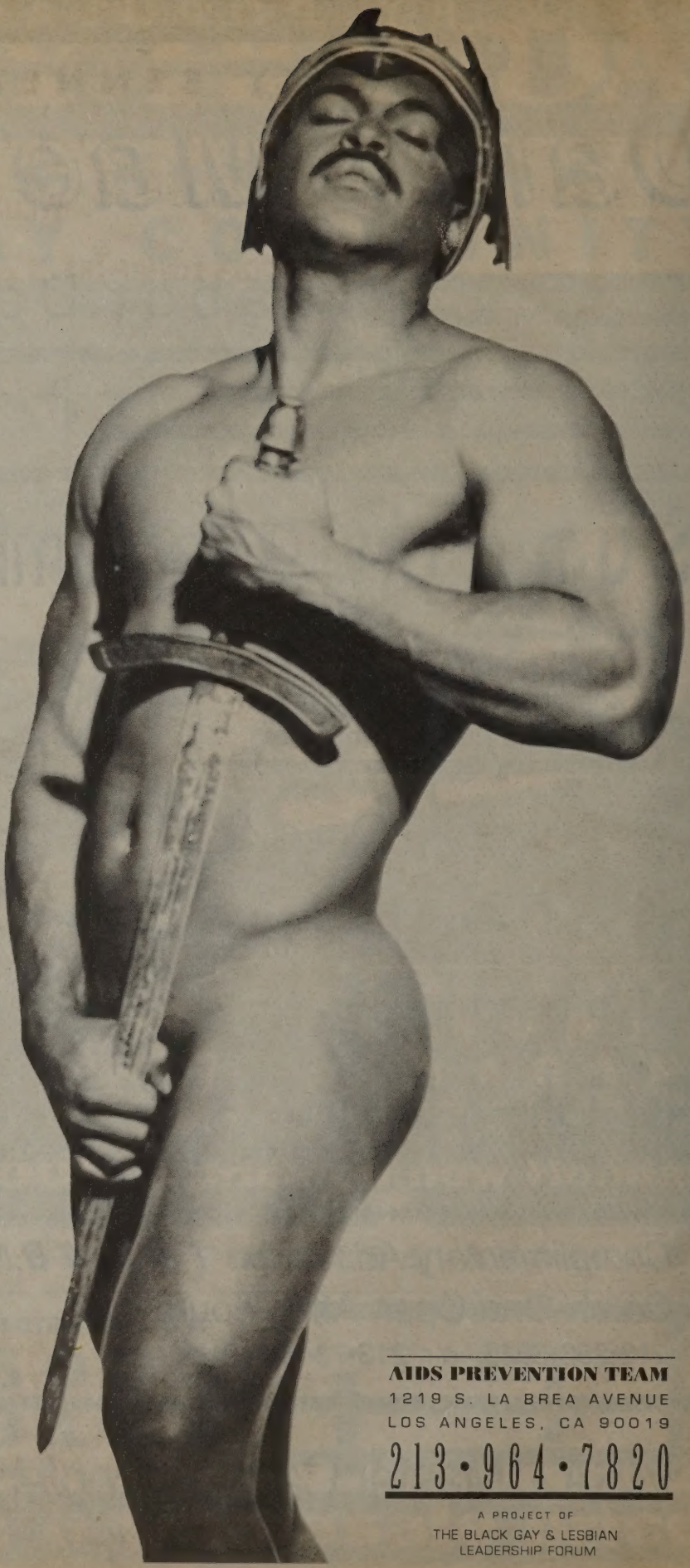

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poetic justice

a film by John Singleton
(Columbia Pictures)

"...and every time you kiss him, you tastin' my pussy!" Diva says as she exits, Baby Got Back booty waving goodbye and kiss my ass, in the rear view.

Two queens engage in a (verbal) cat fight. Three old goddesses git all up in your best friend's bi'ness and one gorgeous man ruins your day and makes your life.

But that's the way love goes...

John Singleton follows up the acclaimed "Boyz N The Hood" with a tough-sexy, rough-tender, by-the-books/against-the-grain romance that's so honest and bold and BLAK it's almost scary.

Brothaaaaaaahs and Sistaaaaaaahs and The Children, too! Doin' our sweet sweet-back baaadaaas thang. And, as usual, its almost too beautiful to bear—like Maya Angelou's poems, connecting scene to scene and Justice's inner-thoughts to her world.

But bear it we will. It's our history. Maestro Singleton stops to explain nothing. Fuck that. We know the deal, and with our history and our pain and beauty being understood from the jump, we can dive right in.

"Poetic Justice" tackles something we all know but don't talk about, for whatever reason: we are fucked up. Black people in America. Yeah, African Americans. Our value system is fucked. Granted, we live in an oppressive society, but we ain't (literal) slaves. We have not been for over a hundred years. Yet, despite our beauty, magnificence, or what have you rhetorically, we remain oppressed. And mostly by ourselves/each other. And only now are we seeing the fall out in our morally, ethically, emotionally and spiritually bankrupt youth.

Rather than attempting to place blame, Mr. Singleton delivers a bit of a parable, as seen through the eyes and told through the heart of a young Black woman named Justice (Janet Jackson).

Justice is pretty much a typical L.A. girl who's world comes crashing down when the love of her life is assassinated in her arms by a rival over a recent grudge. She withdraws from love and the world and retires to the snap-and-read sanctuary of the beauty salon where she works weaving, pressing and crimp-curling some beauty back into the world.

Along comes a wanna-be Mack Daddy, Lucky (Tupac Shakur), who throws a monkey wrench in all her shit. And vice versa. He's head strong and disrespectful, she's head strong and demands respect. It's hate at first sight.

Well...as fate would have it, Justice and Lucky's respective best friends, Iesha and Chicago (Regina King and Joe Torry in funny and often touching performances), are lovers. When the opportunity presents itself for the quartet to take a mutually beneficial trip to Oakland (unwittingly) together, the vicious fun and serious games begin.

In many respects, this is a story we've all seen before—Boy Meets Girl, They Fall In Love, Boy Loses Girl, blah, blah, blah. But there's one extraordinary and ironic twist; Singleton juices the genre by knowing that African-American culture will give weight to the seemingly benign and trivial. Since so much of our shit is about survival, what would be a shallow love story for Tom Cruise, becomes a jagged, sharp edged manifesto for Tupac Shakur.

For example, when the don't wanna-be lovers argue about clearly battle-of-the-sexes issues, we see how deeply entrenched the disrespect for Black women by Black men is. When Justice goes off on the Brother for casually calling her a bitch (like it's a pronoun!) and she responds, "I am a Black woman, and I deserve respect! If I'm a bitch, then your mama's a bitch," before she demands to get out and walk to Oakland rather than ride with disrespect in the flesh, Lucky looks at her like she's crazy.

And this is the central journey. All the young lovers in "Poetic Justice" use brutal, vulgar language even when they're trying to be gentle or romantic, or even friendly. Singleton seems to be saying that African American youth has been taught only the language of survival as opposed to the language of love. And so, it only makes sense that we call our homies "nigguhs", our women "bitches" and everybody "muth-fuckas".

On the road, up close and personal, they confront their fears, anxieties and frustrations. Veering off the freeway, they crash a Black family reunion, and while the musical score offers up the Ojays' chestnut "Family Reunion", the two young couples help themselves to free chicken. Poet Maya Angelou (in a star turn cameo) dishes and debates the quality and direction of the contemporary Black family with Dina D. and Rose Weaver, like three old aunts who have seen and heard everythang. You know, they not only taste-tested water, but they're old enough to call dirt by his first name.

Their comments to and about Iesha's incredibly transparent marriage lies/fantasies may be wry and pithy, but their senior Divas faces and voices betray their own bewilderment. Perhaps the tinge of sadness and lament is for their own failures for not having passed on a certain knowledge to the chil'rens. Perhaps they lament what real love used to be and the thrill of love that had to prove itself as more than the instant physical gratification that Iesha tries to pawn off as love, because she knows no better.

All they can do is shake their heads and wonder.

But all this points to a deeper question: how do you pursue and attain love and happiness in a hateful world, one that tells you to your face that it does not love you?

In "Poetic Justice" nobody knows for sure, but everybody's trying. And Singleton treats everybody with requisite dignity. The two queens in the beauty parlor are funny, bitchy and actually pretty cool. No tragic cipher caricatures. A white trucker provides some cultural but not racist humor. Tyra Farrow is, as usual, gorgeous and wonderful as the bitchy, jaded beauty shop owner with a heart of gold.

Singleton's comprehension and compassion for his subjects is staggering. His love for them is evident in each beautifully framed shot, in Stanley Clarke's thoughtful and intelligent score and every other aspect of the film.

That freshness, that honesty gives the film most of it's grit and charm. The performances are very real. Janet gives a lovely and convincing performance and the camera adores her. But it is Tupac Shakur who delivers a performance that is not only believable, but haunting. His raw animal magnetism reminds one of a very young Wesley Snipes. But he doesn't try to be or act sexy. He's just being real, strait twisted! I'll take a six pack to go.

But even more than that, this is a John Singleton film. It is full of courage. He is unafraid to address our generation's incredible loneliness and grief.

He is no less afraid to offer a solution. I won't tell you what I think that is, though. We each have to make that journey ourselves, in our own way.

You need to see "Poetic Justice", not because you love Miss-Jackson-If-Ya-Nasty or Tupac who is fine as hell or because you liked "Boyz N The Hood". You need to see this film because, like the posters say, "Nobody, but nobody can make it out there alone." You'll see yourself, your friends, your lovers in here.

Family.

Finally, "Poetic Justice" reminds us that (as when Janet and Tupac each take a deep breath and allows the other to touch that most tender part with just a kiss) a little hope goes a long way on the journey through life. Even a drop of water on the desert is not wasted.

John Singleton's film, also featuring new and classic poetry by the still remarkable Maya Angelou, is quite fresh and sweet with promise, like the moment after a summer rain.

Oh, the hope.

victor

a film by K. Brent Hill
(B-Film Production/P.O. Box 7926/Philadelphia, PA 19101)

You know, sometimes reality has a fantasy all its own.

Victor, one of only a few Black works screened at the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, opens with a close-up of a technicolor American flag billowing seductively in the breeze. The national anthem brays in the background. Song ends. Fade up on a handsome Brother named Victor—in black and white.

Also, while Victor, an army reservist, scribbles down phone orders to report for training and ultimate service in an unspecified war, his very handsome lover awakens. The lover immediately fades into the visual periphery.

And so begins Executive Producer K. Brent Hill's fitful, briskly paced journey through real America as lived by a young Black homosexual who gets whacked by the system he's bred to know and love—intimately.

Shifting back and forth between taped interviews, scenes from Victor's (presumably twenty-something) past and his very very surreal present, the viewer is forced to confront the concept of freedom in America. Particularly if you're Black and gay.

When Victor's unnamed, unidentified Anglo interviewer (seemingly representing somebody's god and/or conscience) asks Victor why he joined the Reserves, he has no clear answer. Offered instead, are some vague meandering from our hero about duty, opportunity and the chance to prove he's "tough enough." Uh huh.

Hill, in the title role, underplays the character so much that you're not really sure if Victor is just that naive or just that stupid. Then again, maybe Victor has bought into the American dream. If so, then it may well be that the point is that we have all been narcotized into believing that African Americans are valued more than cattle or chattel—Food-stamps-for-thought over the next grazing.

Ah! To put everything in perspective, let's look at one of the film's most revealing, chilling and haunting moments: the interviewer asks Victor if he dreams in color. Victor can't really answer. The look on his face says that he has no idea what dreaming in color is. He seems to have no point of reference.

Mr. K. Brent Hill's (meaning: OUR) wake-up call is whispered here rather than screamed. He states his case passionately, philosophically and with poetic even-handedness. Rather than bashing you over the head with a wrecking ball of imagery, he simply throws out what looks like a handful of metaphoric and visual feathers.

For example, in an early scene, Victor asks the interviewer if his unguarded remarks about his homosexuality will be held in confidence, we realize just how far in the closet this Brother really is and, of course by extension, just how closeted we all may be in the tiniest, most seemingly insignificant ways—and how pitifully lame some of our rebellions against homophobia may be.

When you have a Brother who's this gorgeous, this intelligent, and this familiar, you start to scrutinize the system further. Next you start to wonder how much you aid and abet that same system which eats you alive.

Still, the substance of Victor is the stuff from which dreams are made in the most literal sense of the term "dreams." We nod to our "dreams" when speaking of our most intimate fantasies, yearnings, desires. And (talk about food-for-thought) sometimes the dream devours the dreamer.

Mr. Hill seems to be calling into question the very notion of reality for an African American homosexual. If you're down with the Brothers, that's cool. Still—can you dream in color in a country where it's understood that your color is ugly?

Again and again, Victor's soil shifts like a sort of Af-Am grey matter psycho-negro pulp. But, it's rooted in the ultimate fantasy/reality—that is, the world as it should be.

For us, this is crucial because we don't have the luxury of assuming that we're loved, desired, wanted in the big-city province of America. It is assumed that we are second class citizens. And this conflict of ideas/ideals is what makes us fucked up—no, it is what keeps us fucked over as a people.

Brutally yet gently honest, Victor reads us/US/Uz for filth! Your oppressor or dominator only has as much power as you give up. In a world where the laws of survival dictate that you fuck or be fucked, if Victor gets fucked then that's on Victor/you/me.
This shit is so Black and nappy, it ain't even funny. For example, Victor ignores the fact that he can't be openly homosexual in the military or that the people asking the questions, directing his destiny, probing his loins in his dreams searching for some abnormality, are non-Africans.

Victor the film seems to be saying that we can't walk around with those blinders on because, frankly, we can't afford them. People are comfortable with killing us, comfortable with watching us die, because we are comfortable with it. Certainly we tend not to enjoy our own genocide, but we are used to it. We are quietly comfortable with it, like a Brother born and bred into total denial and going off to somebody else's war to show he's "tough enough."

Executive producer and star of Victor, K. Brent Hill and producer/director Christopher Leo Daniels deliver an A-plus experimental short film out of their B-films Productions company. Although the production values are sometimes a little rough, the film's content and style more than make up for it.

To tell you the truth, it's good to see entertaining, provocative film-making. No, there are no fuck scenes. Nor is this a coming out story. It's a slice of life tale about us. Told by one of us. For us.

That's a tall order for such a short film (30 minutes), but the Brother's got the goods.

Let there be technicolor.

reviews by gregory eugene travis

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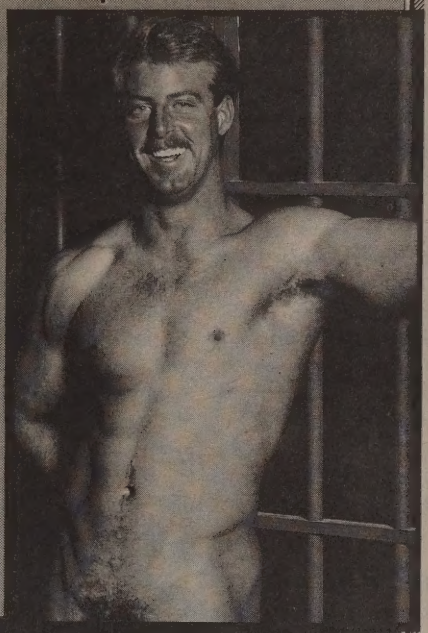

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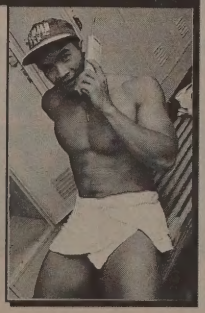

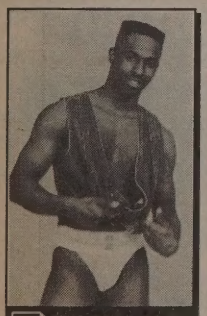

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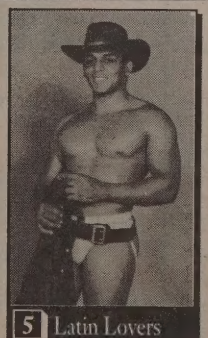

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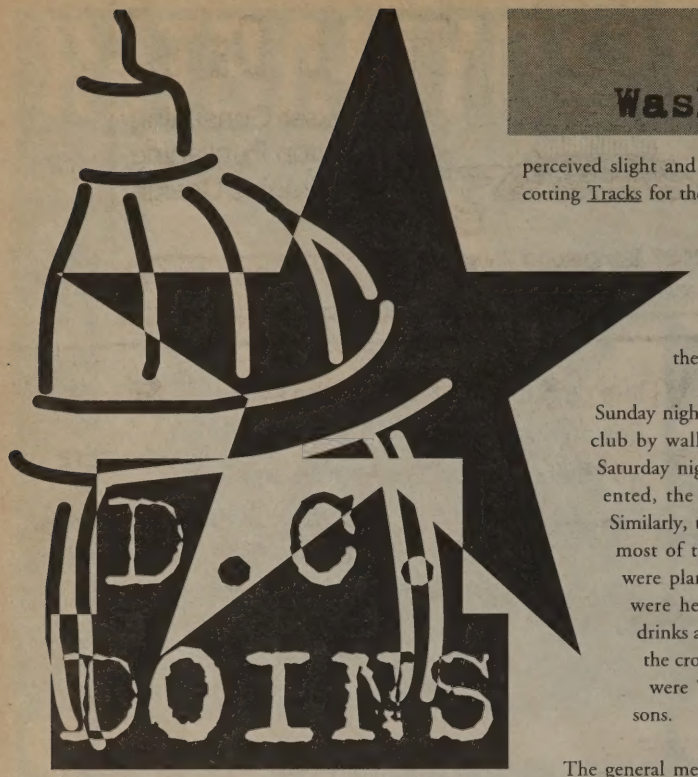

Mark F. Johnson
Washington D.C. Correspondent

TRACKS ON THE WRONG TRACK FOR BLACKS

The long, hot, hazy and humid summer has settled in over Chocolate City and a slow meltdown is occurring all around town. However, not everyone in the nation's capital is lazy during these crazy hot days. A group of politically active men have quietly been bringing pressure to bear on at least two gay establishments in the city. In one case, they want to make the club more African-American sensitive and in the other, more gay sensitive.

Perhaps the most well-known and frequented disco on the east coast among Black gay men, Tracks has been undergoing something of an identity crises. The club is majority Black-owned, yet most of its clientele is white, with the exception of the nationally and internationally famous Sunday night "Banji Parade"—otherwise known as "Black Night".

Most of Tracks' advertising in the city's gay and lesbian newspaper, The Washington Blade, has been geared toward white men because, as one of the club's owners told a group of Black men assembled to express concerns about the club's advertising policies and insensitivity to the Black gay community, "Black gay men don't read."

At issue was an ad announcing a Sunday night dance party which ran during the weekend of the April March on Washington. Remember, Sunday is traditionally Black night at Tracks, yet the ad did not feature one single African-American man. Instead, several white males were pictured in various poses.

Many in the community were offended and insulted at the perceived slight and there was considerable talk of boycotting Tracks for the Memorial Day weekend, which was guaranteed to bring thousand of Black gay men to the club's door on Sunday night. Other concerns were expressed at the community meeting as well.

Sunday night partygoers at Tracks must enter the club by walking through a metal detector. On Saturday nights, which is traditionally white-oriented, the meal detector is nowhere in sight. Similarly, the point was made several times that most of the theme parties and most concerts were planned for Saturday, while hardly any were held on Sunday. On Saturday night, drinks are served in glasses. On Sunday night, the crowd is given plastic. All these measures were "said" to be necessary for safety reasons.

The general message was that the owners of Tracks were making some very negative assumptions about Black gays and generally taking the African-American community for granted. The Black community wanted to get the point across that we would not settle for second-rate service and continue to bring in thousands of dollars in revenue every week!

Apparently, the message was received, at least up to this point. The club has been more inclusive in its advertising and says it will make an effort to be more sensitive to concerns of the Black lesbian and gay community.

I am still a little puzzled however at how Black people have to "make an effort" to understand the concerns of their own community, but...what it boils down to is that the club owners had no idea that Black gay men could be as discriminating as whites and equally quick to express outrage over poor or unfair treatment.

Unfortunately, Tracks owners probably assumed, as many others do, that Blacks merely want to have a good time, no matter the cost, politically or otherwise.

TOO 'DELTA ELITE' TO GIVE A FUCK

And, sad to say, they don't appear to be alone in this thinking even among other African-American gay club owners.

The Delta Elite is known everywhere I've been for playing the best house music in D.C. So it was no surprise that when the club started opening up on Saturday night (it was previously opened only on Friday night as a gay club) a few years ago, the boyz fell up in there big time! They already had the Friday late night Black gay dance crowd, but they began to monopolize the party on Saturday night too!

However, along with the crowd came the crime! Men were being held up outside the club, and several were assaulted and there were even repeated carjackings or attempted carjackings. Reports to the owners apparently went unheeded and the crime outside the club continued.

Meanwhile, inside the club, there were safety concerns that were apparently going unaddressed and, according to representatives of AIDS organizations, efforts to distribute safe sex literature and condoms were rebuffed by management.

So, once again, the politically active and concerned among Washington's Black gay population come together for another town meeting to discuss "the Delta problem". This time, ownership does not show up, but instead sends a representative who basically tells the group that the owner feels that he can do whatever he wants in the Delta and that if nobody likes it, to put it nicely, they don't have to come.

Here we go again. Once more a case of somebody taking Black gay business for granted. The owner of the Delta was requested to respond to the concerns expressed at the meeting within a two week period that has come and gone. Stay tuned...

In the meantime, fellas, don't be afraid to let your dollars speak for you. Like En Vogue says in "Give It Up Turn It Loose"..."if they don't want you, you don't need 'em." That advice is not just for love boyz!

HERE AND THERE

August is looking like a quiet month here as everybody heads to the beach or to backyard barbecues. For the Labor Day Weekend we'll head for that other "Chocolate City down south. Things will pick up strong here though in September as local outfit, BANJII, a Black gay men's cultural group, kicks off a summer/fall lecture series with noted speakers on issues ranging from the gay ban to homosexuality and Islam.

Hot tip...watch the Windy City around the middle of August. Chicago promises to give you "major controversy".

FOR THE DAVID WEEMS FANS

Thanks to all of you who wrote in concerning the David Weems piece. Watch this space for future updates on when and where his work will be displayed and available for purchase.

Write to:

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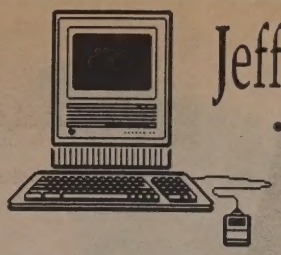

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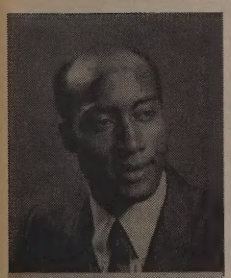

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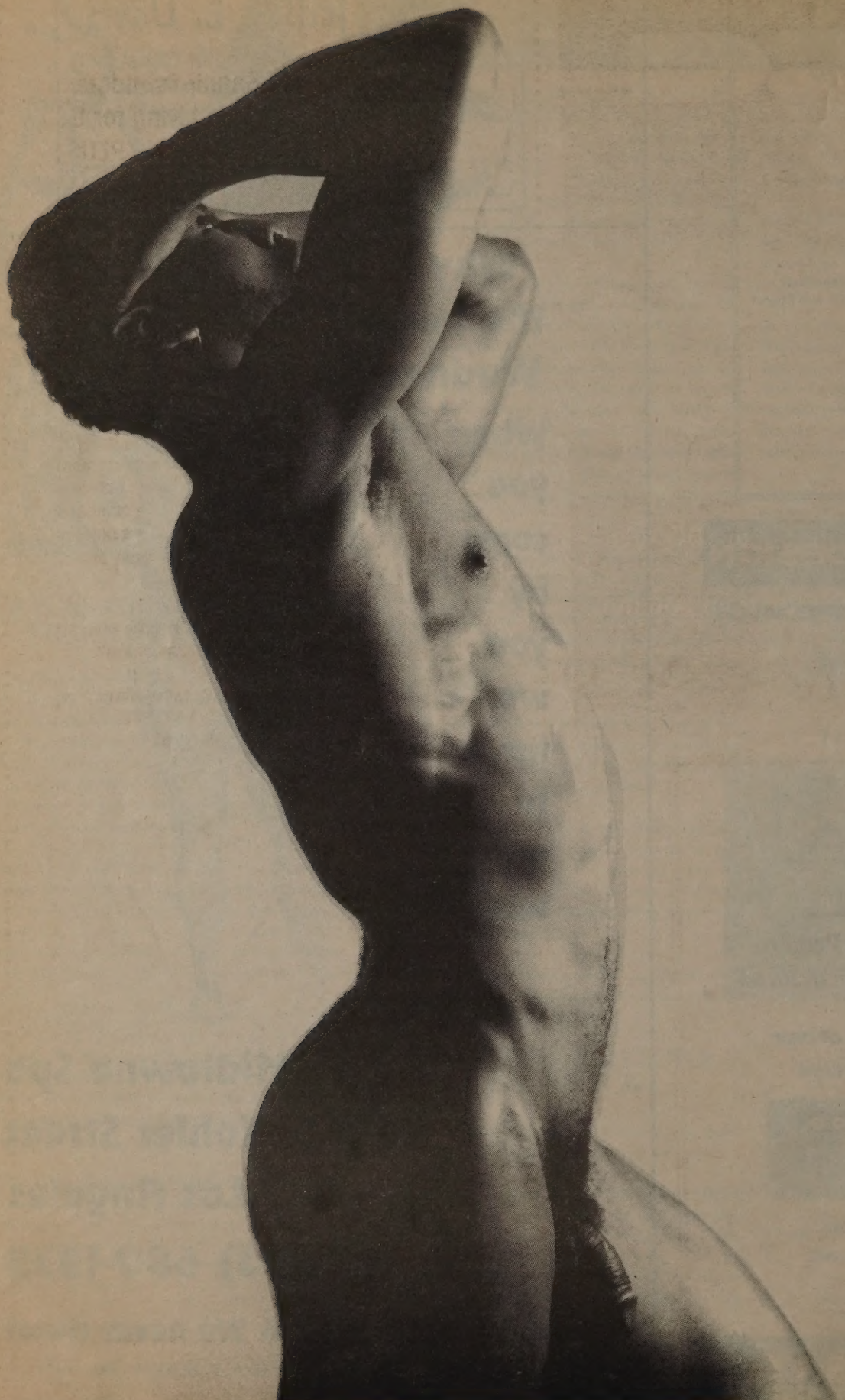

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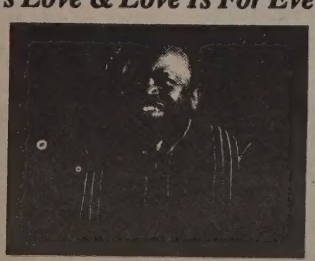

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GAY BASH STRAIGHT SMASH

a true story by Jan'l

Huh, it sure doesn't seem like 15 years have passed! The late 70's were great! Back then everyone was immortal. AIDS existed only in somebody's test tube and sex was America's favorite pastime! If you don't believe me just ask Wilt Chamberlain. Those truly were the good ole days... At the time, casual sex wasn't synonymous with Russian Roulette.

The economy was even up. Prices were reasonable. Life was affordable and jobs were waiting. I walked right out of college into a surgical technician photographer trainee position in ophthalmic research. I was pumped. I even joined the Karate Club at work. My days were filled with the creating of innovative surgical techniques while my nights were devoted to L'amour de la Femme, the hottest women's disco to ever hit Houston. It was an unbelievable mixture of women. Everything from farm boy butch to the creme de la creme of high fashion.

Life was really great until the gay bashing started. Apparently, there was this red Berlinetta Camaro roaming around town picking up gay guys and beating them with baseball bats, then leaving them for dead. This had happened 3 times already to people I knew of but not personally.

Tony Mendez was the bar-back at the club and a lot of fun. I spent several weekends at his house from Thursday through Sunday. It was jumping off! This particular weekend set would be held at the beach. It was the 4th of July weekend. The 4th was actually on Sunday but we started partying Thursday after the club at Tony's house. Friday night after the club we were all going down to the beach so we could be there when the sun came up Saturday morning, party all day at the beach and then go to the gay club in Galveston that night. I road with Sam (Samantha) and left Tony my car to drive down after he closed the bar. His car was just painted. He didn't want it near the sand.

We arrived at the beach about 2 AM. We were drunk and trying to set up tents for us to sleep in. Finally, about 4:30 AM I crawled into the bed of the truck with my sleeping bag. I remembered feeling like something was wrong then. I was hoping I didn't wake up stiff necked. When I awakened at 7 AM and Tony wasn't there, I knew something had happened. I found Sam, woke her up and made her drive me back to Houston (a 45 minute drive). When I arrived at Tony's house my car wasn't there so we went to the club. My car was there. We thought Tony was still at the club. We beat on the door for about an hour. Then finally Kath (the owner) showed up.

"Tony is in the hospital with internal bleeding," She said, "several cracked ribs and bruises over 90% of his body including his face. Witnesses saw him dumped from a red Camaro around 4 AM. They dumped him in the street in from of the club—4 white guys."

I was sick and ready to puke. I asked if anyone had called the police.

"For what?" Kath asked, "This is Houston, honey. Cops here don't give a shit about punks 'n dykes—you have no rights!"

I called the police station to report this crime. They hung up on me all 5 times. So I called the TV stations. Same response. Then I called the radio stations. No help. I felt pissed off, neglected and ready to explode. They were not getting away with this.

I asked this gorgeous young lady, about 5' 5", size 4, if she was gay or if she wasn't gay if she had anything against gay people and did she believe in justice for all. She said NO, NO & YES. Just what I wanted to hear. I asked her if she would mind participating in a sting operation to get some thugs off our streets. All the women in my karate class wanted to participate. The majority of them had been raped, assaulted or both. We needed all the help we could get. So I invited all the women of the karate club over to the Limner to plan the strategy.

Our target was first and foremost this red Camaro.

Tucker was built like an offensive tackle but could run like a wide receiver. Her father owned a car dealership and a Ryder Truck rental outlet. She provided the transportation - 3 Ryder U Hauls. With the 10 women from the karate club plus 12 big dykes we intended to kick some ass.

We took 6 of the finest, most gorgeous women and wired them for sound and put them at 3 different locations in and out of the gay part of town. The girls were backed up by 6 of us. And there were pay phones within a block of each location so we could keep in touch. Now all we had to do was wait.

The second night out, about 12 AM, our boys rode by but they didn't go for the bait. They drove on into our area, I guess in search of some guy to beat up, but we had alerted all the gay clubs in the area not to let anyone leave a club alone, to leave in packs of 6 or more. We called the other two spots to say we'd seen them and they were in the area. Tucker wanted to follow them. I said, "no. That'll look suspicious. Let's just wait."

About an hour later, those red neck bastards went for the bait. It was 6 of them in the car. We waited until they parked and got out. First thing Tucker did was crawl over to their car and slash 3 of the tires. Just when they were getting out-of-hand with the ladies we walked over to the guys, standing between them and their car and started ragging them. Then the two other U-hauls pulled up and all hell broke loose. Within seconds they were surrounded and cut off from their car. It was a free for all. We threw in everything we'd learned in karate plus the dykes had bats to give them a little taste of their own shit.

The guys tried to fight back at first but it was just too many bats on their ass at once. They hit their knees, I stopped punching and kicking (I landed every blow I threw). The other dykes stopped too. But those straight women who had been raped and/or assaulted kept kicking and punching until all 6 men were laid out on the ground.

With the odds over 4 women to 1 man, the fight was over within 15 minutes, and all the men were laid out bloody and badly bruised. We were tired and panting like we'd just run a marathon. I remember smoking a cigarette while the straight women satiated their frustrations.

Tucker asked, "what are we going to do with them?"

"Strip em," I said, "and tie them all together in a butt fucking position, clean their faces and take a picture of each one of them. Then wake 'em up."

We hosed them down for about 5 minutes before they came to. As they awoke, the screaming and taunting started. I just watched as the girls had their fun for about 30 minutes, then it was time to get down to business.

"We have your driver's licenses and your work I. D.'s.," I then said, "If any more gay bashing happens we're sending copies of this butt fucking session you boys appear to be having to everybody at these addresses and every TV station across the country. You boys get the picture? Well, I'm sure your parents will, along with your girlfriends and everybody you know."

These bastards actually tried to bribe us into letting them go. Tucker destroyed their plastic and took all their cash to help pay for Tony's medications.

"You young fellows, you will pay, but not with cash. You bastards are going to patrol these streets in our area and you're gonna fight any gay bashers. You're going to make sure no more gay bashing occurs in the Westheimer District at all. Or, we're going to have posters made up and I myself will staple them all over River Oak where it appears all the real men reside according to your licenses," I continued.

It's amazing how cooperative these red necks turned out to be?!! Funny how all the gay bashing ceased. Not a ripple the rest of the summer. Of course, we did send one set of pictures to each of them to let them know two things. One, we meant business and two, there truly was film in the camera.

Every time I hear anything about gay bashing, I think back to July '78 when we got 'em back.. Ahh, to be young and immortal again...

FIND ME READ ME

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(404) 627-5146

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Pat's Bed and Bagel
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The Ritz Cafe
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The Pear Garden
111 Luckie St.

Chip's Place
3454 Boldercrest Rd.
(Conely)

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Lambda Rising Books
241 W. Chase (at Gay Center)

BMX/Baltimore
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BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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763 Boylston Street

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Lilac Court Bed & Breakfast
8 Lilac Court

CHAPPEL HILL, N. CAROLINA

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COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

Bosum of Ishtar
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AIDS Research Center
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Curious Times Bookstore
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BMX/Detroit
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Sons and Daughters Books
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Los Angeles Gay & Lesbian
Community Service Center
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1616 No. La Brea Avenue

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1318 Westheimer St.

Crossroads Market
3930 Cedar Springs Rd.

INGLEWOOD, CALIFORNIA

The Caper Room
244 S. Market St.

The Annex
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LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA

The Center
2017 East 4th St.

The Executive Suite
3428 East Pacific Coast Hwy.

The Crypt On Broadway
1712 E. Broadway

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Jewel's Catch One
4067 West Pico Bl

The New Horizon
3416 W. Washington Bl.

BMX/Los Angeles
(310) 281-7742

Minority AIDS Project
5149 West Jefferson Bl.

Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership
Forum
1219 So. La Brea

Carl Bean AIDS Care Center
2146 West Adams Bl.

Midtown Spa
615 So. Kohler

MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Oops!
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MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

A Brother's Touch Bookstore
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NEW YORK, NEW YORK

A Different Light Bookstore
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Oscar Wilde Memorial Books
15 Christopher Street

Keller's
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The Sound Factory
530 W. 27th St.

OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

BMX/Oakland
(510) 859-9138

Whisper's Cocktail Lounge
355 19th St.

Club Bella
2330 Telegraph Ave.

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Giovanni's Room
345 South 12th St.

BMX/ Philadelphia
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ROYAL OAK, MICHIGAN

Chosen Books of Michigan
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SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

BMX/Sacramento
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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

Bahses
625 O'Ferrell

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Peacock Alley
1271 University Ave. (Hillcrest)

Gay & Lesbian Comm. Center
3916 Normal

Sterling's Place USA
3317 1/2 Meade

The Crypt
4094 30th St.

The Crypt
1515 Washington St

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Beyond The Closet Books
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SOUTHFIELD, MICHIGAN

Sons and Daughters Books
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ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

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Bodymaster
8713 Santa Monica Bl.

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Pleasure Chest
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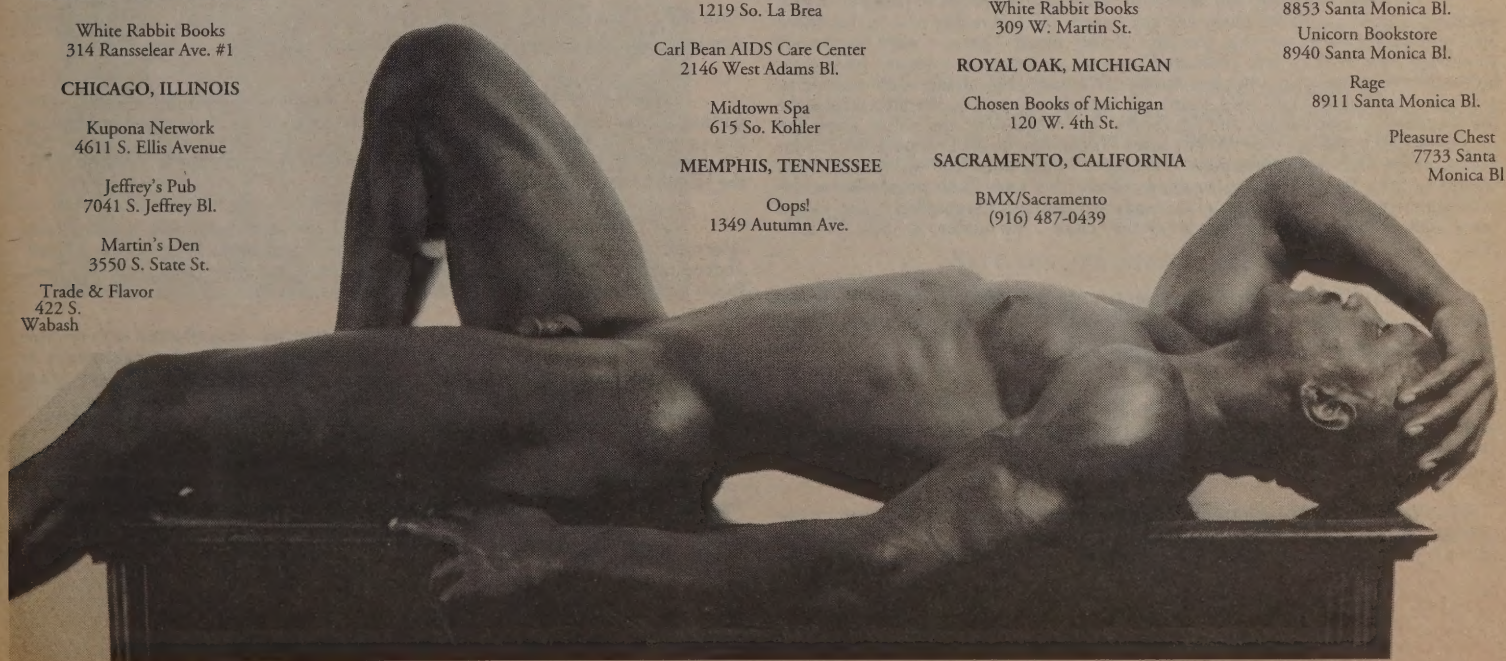


The AIDS Prevention Team's GRIOT

The Griot is a question-and-answer column designed to help brothers and sisters with their problems or concerns around physical, mental and spiritual healing for HIV and AIDS. Answers to all questions are thoroughly researched and, if necessary, checked with medical doctors, psychiatrist, sociologists and other experts. If you have questions, please send them to Blaine Teamer, Treatment Advocate, The AIDS Prevention Team, 1219 S. La Brea Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90019. Only the initials and cities of those submitting questions will be published. Because of the large volume of mail we receive, we cannot send personal replies.

Dear Blaine: I have one for you. My good, good girlfriend is an HIV health educator. He's been seeing this brother who is also in the health care profession. Last week, they finally banged it out. They had the condoms. They had the Nonoxynol-9. They finished the fuck, crashed and then my friend woke up and got in the Jacuzzi. His friend then got in the Jacuzzi with him. Well things got hot and heavy in the Jacuzzi. They started to fuck again. This time no condoms, and my friend took it up the ass. The brother said that he had been tested and was negative. Now my friend should know better. They're supposed to be "dating". They see each other three days out of the month. The brother lives on the east coast. My friend doesn't know when this brother was tested (it could have been 10 years ago), and my friend doesn't know what this man does when he isn't with him. Could you please address this issue? Chain of Fools

Dear Chain of Fools: I know that sometimes the dick (or the kitty) can look damn delicious. Lord knows it's easy to get caught up in the moment, however, it only takes a moment to become infected. Over ten years into this pandemic and we're still getting infected. In Los Angeles County alone, there has been a 7% increase in newly diagnosed HIV positive AfricanAmerican gay men in 1993. Why? I don't know.

I do know one thing. You need to tell Miss One she needs to take her "happy wannabe-in-love" ass to the clinic and get tested. The sad reality of it is that there ain't nothing for me to say that you ain't already heard. Hence, I want to attempt something new, venture into uncharted territory, go where few sissies have gone before. We're opening up a hot line number. We want the "children" to respond to your question. Cause, like I said, I ain't got nothing new to say. We'll then tabulate the responses during August and September and let you and the nation know the responses. This is the question: What causes African-Americans to engage in behavior that is unsafe and what can be done to change it? Also, when (and with who) are you willing to take the risk? Keep in mind that in this case both people knew the information in regards to modes of transmission and still disregarded it. Let's shed some light on this issue so we can break the "chain". The number is 1.800.9.TREAT-HIV.

Dear Blaine: I hear that scientist are working on a vaccine for the HIV virus. Will this vaccine be for people who are positive or for negative people? Fingers Crossed/Los Angeles, CA

My Dear Fingers: Good news. Researchers are working on both. The vaccines for HIV fall under two categories. Preventative vaccines for negative people and treatment vaccines for positive people. Vaccines are given to you so that your body will have a particular immune response if you are exposed to a specific disease.

Not long after researches identified HIV as the culprit, work began on the development of a vaccine. Now that many of the kinks have been ironed out, they have a few HIV vaccines that are ready for testing in clinical trials.

The several AIDS vaccines now in human trials were made using the latest information available about this disease and modeled after successful vaccines for other diseases. As you know, vaccines have been developed for other viral infections. These clinical trails will be looking for side effects and how well the vaccine stimulates an immune response.

Clinical trails are used to find out how a new drug works on actual people. Many of us don't want to be a human "guinea pig" (Let's not forget the Tuskegee Experiment). However, we really need to keep abreast of what new forms of treatment are being studied. It could be the answer we've been waiting for or sustain us until one is found. I suggest you do research. Get as much information as you can. Learn about the different phases of a study. What's the difference between a Phase I and a Phase III study? Also keep in mind that this vaccine has a long way to go before it will be released to the general public.

Across the country, trails are opening up for AIDS vaccines; gp 120, rgp 160, rp 24 and several others. We as Black people need to get involved. So many of the drugs that have been created have only been tested and studied on white gay men. This is problematic. Not only are they getting the drug first, researchers have no idea how it will work on Black folks, especially Black women.

For more information about sights where studies are being done, give APT a call. The number is 1.800.9. TREAT.HIV, ask for Larry Mims, our clinical trail specialist.

Dear Blaine: I need some information. My lover was just diagnosed with MAI. I want to help him the best I can. What do I need to know about this infection. What should I expect? Dedicated/San Diego, CA

My Dear Dedicated Brother: I commend you for standing by your partner and for seeking information (Black men take note). I send you strength, love and support. MAI (Mycobacterium aviumintracellular) is an opportunistic infection that hits between 30 to 50% of AIDS patients in the USA. As people live longer with AIDS, the likelihood of an MAI diagnosis goes up.

AIDS patients with Tcells below 200 are at risk for this opportunistic infection. Symptoms of MAI (also known as MAC) include weight loss, high fever, abdominal pain, diarrhea and night sweats. It can infect the blood, spleen, liver, lymph nodes, bone marrow, lung and intestines.

MAI is not easy to kill, and it develops resistance to antibiotics with relative frequency. The bacteria that causes MAI is virtually everywhere in the environment. It has been identified in dust, soil, poultry and diary products. Generally, they try to treat the disease with drugs that are used to treat tuberculosis, such as isoniazid. There have been a few studies in a small number of patients where four drug regimens have appeared to have some effect on the disease.

In the past year, two new antibiotics have been put on the market that work significantly against MAI. They are clarithromycin and azithromycin. These two drugs aren't FDA-approved for use against MAI, but "off label" simply means using a drug for something other than that for which it has been approved.

Clarithromycin may have side effects which can be severe in some patients, including nausea, abdominal cramping, nightmares and hallucinations. However, the majority of people can tolerate clarithromycin with very little side effect. If one can't deal with clarithromycin, azithromycin can be substituted. There is also a drug called clofazamine, however, a recent study has indicated that this drug is best used in combination with other drugs. Currently there are no drugs that have been approved for MAI. So once again, we go back to clinical trails. USC (213.343.8280) and UCLA (310.222.3848) are doing a study with azithromycin and rifabutin for the prevention of MAI with fluconazole for patients with less than 100 Tcells. Your partner may be eligible.

Whatever route he decides to take, treatment for the disease is probably going to be something that he'll have to do for the rest of his life. Keep in mind that he'll need to continued to strengthen his overall health. How is he dealing with AIDS mentally? How is his spiritual health? These all need to be kept in check also. Help him stay strong. I wish (as I'm sure all of the readers do) you and your partner the best.

DEAR GRIOT: It's been a year since I found out that I was HIV positive. I'm wondering now if I should stick with my current doctor. Because my Tcell count is so high (700's), she doesn't think I need to be doing anything. Perhaps I should get a specialist.? C.W./San Diego, CA

My Dear Brother C.W.: AIDS is a new disease as far as diseases go. Have a talk with Miss Doctor, and find out how much she knows. The real question is how much is she willing to learn? You know what I'm saying? After you find this out, you can make a conscious decision about sticking with Miss One or moving on to another Miss One.

A doctor that you can trust and feel comfortable working with is vital. Remember that a doctor is there to help you stay healthy. One of the problems that I see with many Western doctors is that they don't tell you how to stay healthy. They just help you after you become ill. Well that's just plum crazy. Of course doctors don't have all the answers, and it's impossible that they know everything about you. However, when you do see a doctor, they need to at least act like they're paying attention. Are you with me? I tell my clients to keep a note pad and document there symptoms, side effects and concerns. Then when they go in for their appointment they can show it to the doctor. How many times have you went in to see your doctor and forgot half the things that you wanted to talk to him/her about? More than once.

I believe that there is always something that you can be doing to improve your health. She could have referred you to a nutritionist, a masseur, told you to start an exercise plan, or about a health seminar. There are lots of things that you could be doing now.

There are different types of ways to approach this disease, and there are specialist for each approach. I don't think it is wise to have blind faith in your doctor. Educate yourself and you'll find your own answers. Then discuss your ideas and decisions with your doctor. It is about self-empowerment. Remember that, and don't forget who the doctor is working for.

AFRICAN PROVERB

"When the vine entwines your roof, it is time to cut it down."

CAMEROON

P.S. If a cure for AIDS comes from a scientist's lab, how long will it be before African Americans living with the disease find out about it? Are you aware of the Berlin Conference? Do you remember the Tuskegee Study? On September 4, 1993, from 2–5 PM at King Drew Medical Center - Keck Auditorium, 12021 South Wilmington Avenue in Compton, California, The AIDS Prevention Team is proud to present The Road Less Traveled, an examination of clinical trails and the role African Americans need to play in them. Where will you be on September 4th? Where will you be when a cure is found?

word UP

Echinacea - A Native American herb that is used for blood purification and stimulating vital organs. It neutralizes acids, removes excess fat where toxins are retained and is effective in reducing pain and muscle spasms. It is considered to be a natural antibiotic and inhibits the growth of bacteria, viruses and parasites.

Pau d' arco - A Brazilian herb that is recognized as an anti-viral, immune enhancer and energy booster. It is especially recommended in eradicating thrush.

Siberian Ginseng - Increases antibodies and promotes the synthesis of enzymes important in fighting toxins. It has been effective in fighting adverse reactions to chemotherapy. Ginseng is also successful in fighting depression, irritability, insomnia, and sharpening memory.

Spirulina - This vegetable algae is nature's richest source of protein. It contains all ten essential amino acids, and is a perfect supplement for increasing energy in protein deficient, appetite suppressed people.

St. Johnswort - This herbal plant has been found to inhibit retroviral infection and leukemia in animal and laboratory tests. Hypericin, the active ingredient in the plant, has proven effective against herpes and influenza. It also has a history as an antidepressant and anti-biotic.

Courtesy of the Brothers at **Us Helping Us**, Washington D.C.

The purpose of the AIDS Prevention Team (APT) is to provide AIDS education about prevention, early intervention and treatment options. APT articulates the voice of the often silent portion of the African American community which is HIV infected. It is this articulation that will eventually lead us into aborting this pandemic and proclaiming that we will be here for the cure:

Services provided by the APT:

- ☞ Safer-sex workshops
- ☞ Aerobics & Yoga classes
- ☞ Support groups
- ☞ Treatment advocacy
- ☞ Community meetings
- ☞ Medical referrals
- ☞ Afrocentric and Holistic counseling

APT is a project of The Black Gay and Lesbian Leadership Forum. For more information about all of the services that we provide, call 1.800.9.TREAT-HIV.

AFROCENTRICALLY YOURS

By Kheven La Grone

From my father to Malcolm X, I've always appreciated Black manhood. Unfortunately, it didn't always seem to appreciate me.

I was an artistic child. My design was selected for the cover of my junior high school yearbook. I was very proud. But the other Black boys in school labelled me a sissy. "It looks like a flower," one teased. Angrily, I vowed never to "bless" them with my art again. I turned to books.

In high school, when I carried my school books, I was accused of "looking like a white boy". I was called "bookworm". I was usually the only Black male in my college-prep classes. Several times during my high school life (and even one time in college), groups of my brothers heckled me from my classroom doorway.

In my school, Black boys played basketball—PERIOD.

I hated basketball—PERIOD. So what was I? A sissy? A punk? A woman? Pussy? Bitch? And though I hated such labels, I rejected any shackles to any roles. Besides, even then, I noticed the labels were misogynistic.

Years later I am sitting in a circle of intelligent and articulate Black men. Some are Black men who love Black men. Two others (one's an activist, the other is Ugandan) are Black men who love women. We've come together to discuss Black masculinity.

Confronting Misleading Images

Are we angry, violent and self-destructive? Do we "think with our dicks"?

We knew the images: scowling, adolescent gang-bangers flaunting pit bulls leashed on heavy truck chains; basketball players endorsing sneakers; and flamboyant, but powerless politicians.

Black male biologists, economists and entrepreneurs (excluding drug dealers) were noticeably invisible in the media.

But Black men-who-love Black men are misrepresented as well. Black men-who-love Black men were perceived to be disassociated from their Black manhood (to even publicly denounce their Black manhood). This devalued Black manhood.

So whether we loved women or men, it was obviously time we spoke for ourselves. We had to confront our own demons within.

We found ourselves in a circle, man-to-man, brother-to-brother, heart-to-heart.

We talked. We listened. Afrocentricity and homophobia—is homosexuality the white man's disease? We found ourselves debating Afrocentricity (ironically, the Ugandan questioned the whole concept of Afrocentricity). Sometimes it seemed that Afrocentists, like some rappers, define Black masculinity by their denouncement of homosexuality. This implies that Black masculinity is not its own entity.

If ogling women is so harmless, why do straight Black men react angrily to a gay man's ogling? "We're afraid he might see something gay in us" and, as one man confessed, homosexuality was seen as being "low" (his honesty must be respected).

"Why does everything have to be gay?", the activist asked.

"Why does everything have to be straight?" a gay man answered.

"Everything's not straight", the activist retorted.

"What about men serenading women in the music videos, co-workers with pictures of their wives and girlfriends on their desks, co-workers asking when you're getting married..." Even the activist had to agree.

I thought about the excitement around Whitney Houston and Bobby Brown's wedding.

But if homophobia miraculously disappeared today, would white gay men be any less racist then their straight counterparts? From what we all had experienced in the "gay mecca" (San Francisco), we all doubted it. Here, stereotypes like the exotic mulatto, the big, black buck and the big, black dick persist. The Black men-who-love Black men shared experiences of feeling like toys or accessories. One man complained about feeling unwelcomed on Castro.

But if racism was eliminated today, would Black men be less homophobic?

Is their homophobia in the Black community? We've all heard the rappers' and religious condemnation of homosexuality. But everyone had an "Uncle Jimmy". He was a part of the family. He never married. If anyone asked, Grandmother would just say "he's just a li'l sweet". That was the end of it.

Stripping Away The Images And Finally Seeing Each Other

The activist recounted having been impressed by a male co-worker's intelligence and skills. He was surprised when that co-worker revealed his preference for men. It shattered his perceptions of Black gay men as "weak" and "liabilities".

So who's an asset? Lovin' men or lovin' women, conformity is not always an asset. Conformity can mean enslavement—-not unity. What if Spike Lee, Huey Newton or Don King did not express their individualities?

I am no asset as a gawky and fumbling basketball player. I, and most other Black men, would do better striving for an M.B.A., not the N.B.A. Egghead, bookworm, nerd or geek—I am what I am. This is how I express my individuality.

And my penis has not shriveled up and fallen off.

I am Black. I am male. When I walk into a room, this is the first thing one sees. I am in brotherhood with my father, grandfathers, brothers, uncles, etc. I know a young boy's need to join the Boy Scouts or a street gang in search of a sense of family and identity—in search of a brotherhood.

Defining Black Manhood

Now, almost three hours into the meeting, we find ourselves talking brother-to-brother. We know it's time to close the meeting. "Should we define Black manhood?", someone asked? "Do we need to?", someone else answered. We know who we are. Besides, definitions lead to boxes and labels. Labels belong on clothes.

As we leave, I reach over to shake the activist's hand. For a moment we both are self-conscious. He shrugs his shoulders as if to say "what the hell". We hug like true brothers.

The meeting was a success.

On my way home, I remember the hard-looking brother jogging along Lake Merrit. His fluorescent yellow spandex running suit screams at me. His body is hard and masculine. He drives an old blue truck.

He is not shackled by John Wayne-esque macho.

He is expressively male. His colors roar like a male lion. The yellow is iridescent, like the male peacock in full display. He looks as fiery as the male Siamese Fighting Fish before attack.

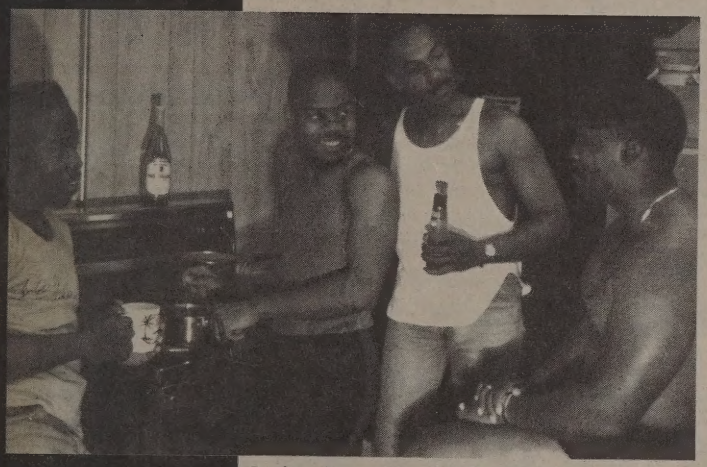
His colors are as proud as an African king. If I ever need to define Black manhood, I'll start with him.

If you want to keep a secret from Black folks, hide it in a book.

- old proverb

Hey Brothers,
we have a lot to talk about...

THE BLACK GAY MEN'S RAP



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SBC PERSONALS

August 1993 Volume 2 Issue 4

CALIFORNIA

BLACK PROFESSIONAL BODY-BUILDER, mature, seeks live-in Man Friday in exchange for room and board. I'm a healthy non-smoker with varied interest including music and opera; currently I'm studying voice. I seek a mature Black man to handle correspondence and the telephone, generally acting as a protective shield against social and casual distractions. You are perhaps of retirement age and have another source of income. You are responsible, patient, willing to pitch in, a non-smoker and willing to move to Palm Springs. If you're serious about companionship, and willing to work in exchange for meals and a place to live, please write. Hank, Box 654, Palm Springs, CA 92262.

EXHIBITIONIST UNITE: amateur photographer looking for in-shape, well endowed Blacks and Latinos for models. Trade photos (artistic only) for your time. Shots a la Ritts, Weber. Show me what you have! Call Ted: 213.224.0243.

COMMITMENT AND VALUES: B/M, 48, 5'11", 170, G/P seeks an affectionate tall G/A white or Black top man 40-55 who likes 1-to-1, home-life, mountains and stability. Mel, Box 712427, L.A. 90071, 213.243.9882.

GBM, 47, wants to meet 40+ GBM. Serious only. Answer machine: 619.324.5450.

DC

BLACK BI MALE, 6'3 1/2", 215 lbs., attractive, masculine, seeks Black young servicemen (ex-Marines, Army, Navy guys) and young men 25-35 for friendship; no fats, no fems. Box 4591, Washington, D.C. 20017

BLACK WRESTLER LOOKING for other masculine guys into hot and sweaty wrestling action in swim trunks, jocks, etc. Long, man to man, erotic wrestling action and oil wrestling. Box 91428, Washington, D.C. 20090-1428 or call 202.291.0907.

MARYLAND

IT COULD BE YOU! Would like to meet the right person for the right thing. Johnny 7, Box 56, Temple Hills, MD 20757.

MICHIGAN

BGM, 5' 11", 185, very attractive, muscular, enjoys communicating, eating, music, sports and working out. Seeks BGM muscular with same interests. No fats, fems need apply. K. Anderson, Box 14626, Detroit, MI 48214.

SINCERE, HONEST, ATTRACTIVE GBHM, 26 year old, masculine, muscular, ultra-romantic and tired of being mistaken for heterosexual. Seeks to correspond with all minorities that are serious about friendship with a possible relationship. I have seen a lot of life and I do know what I want. I have experienced enough to know what I desire and still believe that my Soul-Mate is out there. Gay is "not my life" but "part of my life!" Like spending time with friends, working out, traveling, dancing, romantic dinners, etc. Photo will be exchanged for one of mine. Box 02666, Detroit, MI 48202-0666.

MISSOURI

GBM, 20, PASSIVE, wants Blk gentlemen from 22-40 for pen friends. Will travel for right person. Must be very masculine/bi top and serious. Phone and phone. All responses answered. LaMark 816.924.1923

NEW YORK

ATHLETIC, BGM JAMAICAN, intelligent, down to earth, top, 30, 5' 9", 140 lbs., seeks a no B/S, mature, compatible, in-shape, healthy, conscientious brother. Box 1447, New York, NY 10113-1447.

ATTRACTIVE PR, 41, 140 lbs., 5'11", interested in meeting Blacks (African-American, West Indian including Rastas) and fair to dark skinned PRs, Dominicanos, Arabs and Brazilians for fun and friendship. Must be top, hung 8+, clean, straight looking/acting, discreet, able to keep an erection with condom on. Age/height unimportant. No bottoms, fats, collect or j/o calls, solicitors or hustlers. NYC residents or visitors to this area only. Call Lou, 718.271.0832, 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. or leave message.

NORTH CAROLINA

IN SEARCH OF a muscular Black man for friend/lover. GWM, 40, 5' 10", 175, bearded/balding, "bearish", works out regularly, into bodybuilders. POB 25261. Raleigh, NC 27611.

OHIO

SEEKING GBM. This GWM, 36, 5'11", 155, is searching for Black friend/roommate/lover. I'm sincere, honest, quiet and faithful. You can be tall or short, but not overweight. Sex is not important, but a serious relationship is. I will treat you like you've never been treated before. Respond with letter/photo to Ron, Box 141023, Dayton, OH 45414.

BLACK MALE, 40, 6', 175 lbs., muscular, athletic, healthy and inexperienced. Seeks masculine top stud for mutually satisfying meetings, possible relationship. Box 94189, Cleveland, OH 44114.

ATTRACTIVE BM, 25, seeks gay lover. DeWayne Guynes, Box 45699, Lucasville, OH 45699.

VIRGINIA

ATTRACTIVE GBM ARTIST, 29, 5' 8", 145, HIV+, in good health. Seeks attractive, well built masculine homeboy of black or white color to share interest in music, weight lifting, workouts, theater, African art, sports, cooking, reading, intimate evenings and more serious about life and living it with an open mind and have hopes of stimulating relationship. Then send photo and letter to Box 3216, Reston, VA 22090.

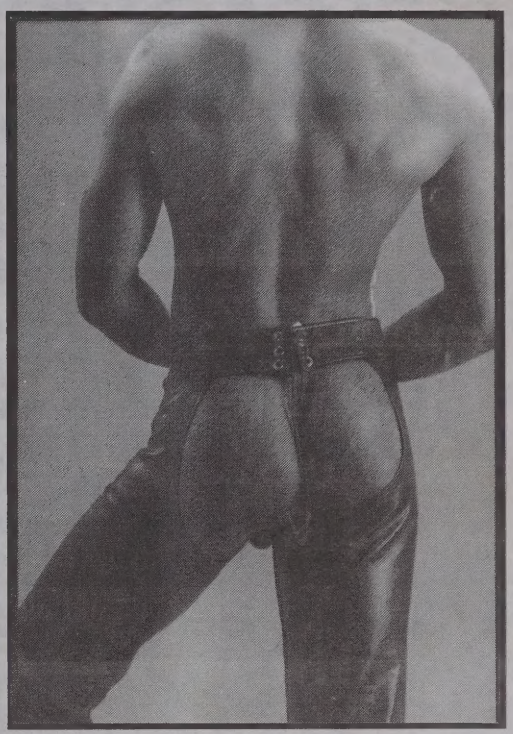
WASHINGTON

GOOD LOOKING GBM, 31, 5' 10", 165 lbs., very masculine, professional, traveled, fit homeboy-ish, well endowed, part Latin, seeks built, straight appearing, hot-looking young macho Hispanic, ethnic or BM. Relationship or friend. Find love, get nasty, romp or hang. Photo for reply. Box 78151, Seattle, WA 98178.

WISCONSIN

BETWEEN 21-40? African-American, Puerto Rican, other? Goal oriented? Passionate? Endowed at least 8 1/2" and thick? Attuned to social justice? I am 43, GHM, 5' 10", Blk/Bm, 225 lbs., seeking intimacy and friendship. Respond to all, will return photos. Mark, Box 10361, Milwaukee, WI 53210.

FOR THE S&M WORSHIPER THE LEATHER LOVER THE WEEKEND WARRIOR AND THE EROTICALLY CURIOUS



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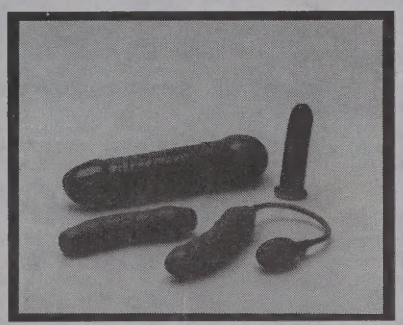

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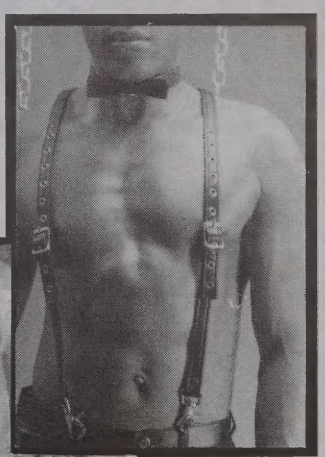

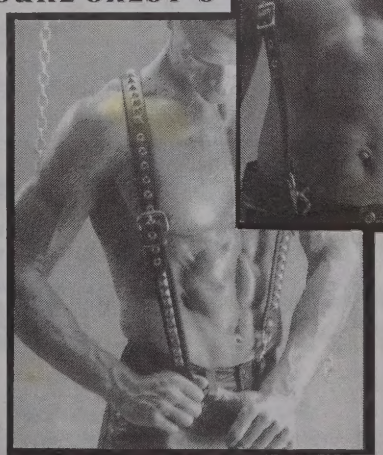

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